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**Music for Classroom Wellbeing Professional Learning: The Exploration of a
Music Therapist Teacher Support Program**

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**Submitted in total fulfilment of the requirements of the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
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**Department of Music Therapy
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Abstract

This emergent qualitative research project explored new music therapy practices for supporting teachers in the current neoliberal education climate. For over twenty years, authors have described diverse school-based music therapist teacher support programs in which the practising music therapist has intended to support teachers (Rickson, 2010b). However, it has also been acknowledged that teachers have found it difficult to sustain practices and benefits from such programs after the music therapist has left the school setting (McFerran, Crooke, & Bolger, 2017; McFerran, Thompson, & Bolger, 2015; Rickson & Twyford, 2011). A Critical Interpretive Synthesis of forty publications pertaining to music therapist teacher support programs allowed the identification of a lack of focus on the needs and resources of teachers in the music therapy teacher support programs described. This thesis attempts to address this realisation through the exploration of alternative practices of music therapist teacher support that maximise the possibility that teachers sustain benefits and practices long after the program has ceased.

Within this project, ethnographically informed research methods were used to develop understandings of the practice of supporting six participating teachers. A need for supporting teachers to strengthen classroom wellbeing was identified. Teachers then engaged in a music therapist led program named “Music for Classroom Wellbeing Professional Learning”. Findings revealed that through focusing directly on teachers, teacher participants were supported to enrich their musicality, develop their use of teaching practices, and foster self-care. Teachers’ growth in these three interconnected domains appeared to allow them to strengthen the wellbeing of all members of the classroom. Furthermore, teachers were enabled to engage in practices that countered the performative pressures of the current neoliberal school context. Through positioning as an enabler of sharing, the music therapist

encouraged teachers to share music, knowledge and aspects of their personal self within and beyond the school setting in a manner that continued after the program had ceased.

Based on these findings, this thesis concludes with a series of provocations to music therapists considering future music therapist professional and caregiver support programs across contexts. Music therapists are encouraged to consider the ways in which they may similarly position as an enabler of sharing and support professionals and caregivers in other settings. Enacting the shifts in practice described within this thesis has the potential for supporting others to use music to transform the lives of themselves and the people they are caring for without a music therapist present.

Declaration

This is to certify that:

- i. This thesis comprises my own original work towards the degree of Doctor of Philosophy except where indicated in the Preface,
- ii. Due acknowledgement has been made in the text to all other material used,
- iii. The thesis is fewer than 100 000 words in length, exclusive of tables, maps, bibliographies and appendices.

Signed:

Name: Megan Steele

Date: 25/5/2020

Preface

This thesis includes a complete version of a published article. Authorship of this article has been determined in discussion with the supervisory team.

Paper 1 in Chapter Two

Steele, M. E., Crooke, A. H. D., & McFerran, K. S. (2019). What about the teacher? A critical interpretive synthesis on literature describing music therapist teacher support programs. *Voices: A World Forum for Music Therapy*, 20(1), 1-18.

This paper presents a critical interpretive synthesis of previous publications pertaining to music therapists providing support to teachers in schools. It is presented in its entirety in Chapter Two of this thesis. For ease of readership, formatting of this publication is consistent with the remainder of the thesis. However, in contrast with the rest of the thesis, third person voice is used within the Chapter Two publication. The researcher is therefore referred to as “Meg” within this paper.

Funding

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Thank you to the many other staff members and students at The University of Melbourne who have provided me with support over the course of this project. I extend so much gratitude to Dr. Grace Thompson for chairing my advisory committee, ongoing assistance with research ethics, your considered questions and generous praise. Thank you to

Dr. Lisa Mackay-Brown for making the trek down to Southbank to offer an education perspective on my project, and your advice. To my dear friend Dr. Lucy Bolger, thank you for reminding me that a PhD can be much more than writing a thesis. Further afield, thank you to Associate Professor Daphne Rickson for your mentorship. To my existing and past friends and colleagues from the Creative Art and Music Therapy Research Unit at The University of Melbourne, thank you for your friendship, ideas and dialogue.

Thanks are also due to my amazing network of friends who have remained constant as I have grappled with life as a PhD student. The weekly phone chats, regular and irregular catch ups, park and playgroup dates have all helped so much. Thank you also to Pip, Bec, Helen O and Helen C for all your support with proofreading.

Finally, thanks to my incredible family for the love and belonging that allows to me become the best version of me I can be – something I wish for each student in every classroom. Thank you, Dad, for giving me the gift of knowing that all good teaching starts with a relationship. Thank you, Mum, for showing me that there is nothing that I can't do in my work with the time I have available, and for the proofreading help. Thank you, Elle and Bridge, for sharing the journey of learning that the ways in which we can most help always begin with looking after ourselves. Thank you Jamie and Sandra for all your care and spending time with Jack so I could knuckle down and write. And, most of all, thank you to my beautiful boys. I am so blessed to have you by my side. Jack, thank you for always bringing me back to the here and now, for reminding me of what is truly important in this world, for asking me to play. Finally, to my best friend and partner for life Joshie. You are the biggest enabler of them all. You knew I was going to complete this PhD a lot earlier than I did. Thank you for gently planting the seed, reminding me that I love this stuff and to enjoy it, talking things over and helping edit, and for being by my side always.

Jack, this is for you my darling.

May you know classrooms where everyone one is welcome, where difference is celebrated, where the number of things to discover and ways you might discover them is infinite, and where there is lots of music.

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Part One: Locating the Research Project.

Chapter One: Introduction

Introduction to the thesis.

This thesis tells the story of an emergent qualitative research project exploring new applications for the practice of music therapy in education. Use of the word “story” is intended to convey the subjective nature of the understandings within this thesis as well as my belief that crafting written text is a performative act. The story of the research project depicted in this thesis unfolds over four parts. The parts that make up the story told in this thesis are listed in Table 1.1.

The major aim of this research project was to explore possibilities for a music therapist teacher support program in the context of the current neoliberal education climate. The phrase “music therapist teacher support program” is used within this research project to indicate the active role of the music therapist in providing support to teachers.

The first part of the story of this thesis, Locating the Research Project, details the series of insights that led to the emergence of a frame for the exploration of a music therapist teacher support program; Music for Classroom Wellbeing Professional Learning. The local and wider educational context of the project is outlined and a critical interpretive synthesis of previous literature pertaining to music therapist teacher support programs is presented.

The second part of the story details the approach used to study the Music for Classroom Wellbeing Professional Learning Program itself. The underpinning philosophical, methodological and theoretical orientations are presented and ethnographically informed research methods are described. In the text of this thesis, the phrase “research project” is used to encompass the entirety of my PhD studies, described over the whole thesis. In keeping with the terminology used by critical ethnographer Madison (2012), I have chosen to use the

term “study” to refer to the ethnographically oriented exploration of Music for Classroom Wellbeing Professional Learning that transpired as part of this research project.

The third part of the story includes five ethnographic accounts that present the practice of supporting teachers through the Music for Classroom Wellbeing Professional Learning Program. Three interconnected domains of growth in which teachers were supported are discussed in reference to the literature pertaining to music therapy and educational practices.

The final part of the story that makes up this thesis presents a discussion of the new theoretical understandings that emerged from this research project. The synthesised findings are presented and implications and recommendations for future practice offered. The story of this thesis ends with a short conclusive reflection on the research project as a whole.

Table 1.1

Parts that Make Up the Story of this Thesis

Part	Chapters	Title
Part One	Chapter 1-3	Locating the Research Project
Part Two	Chapter 4-5	Approach to the Study of a Music for Classroom Wellbeing Professional Learning Program
Part Three	Chapter 6-8	Ethnographic Accounts of the Practice of Supporting Teachers
Part Four	Chapter 9-11	Discussion and Implications of New Theoretical Understandings from this Research Project

The beginning of the story.

The initial part of the story of this thesis contains three chapters. This part of the story encompasses a series of reflections on literature, position and context that emerged at the beginning of this research project. Within this part, the emergent and contextually bound approach of this research project that led to the emergence of the frame of the music therapist teacher support program is introduced. The chapters that make up this part of the story are depicted in Table 1.2.

Table 1.2

Chapters that Encompass Part One: Locating the Research Project

Chapter	Title
Chapter One	Introduction
Chapter Two	A Critical Interpretive Synthesis on Literature Describing Music Therapist Teacher Support
Chapter Three	Introduction to the Frame for the Exploration of a Music Therapist Teacher Support Program

The initial chapter of this thesis introduces the emergent approach of this research project exploring new applications for music therapist teacher support programs in the current education climate. The first section of this chapter describes the initial steps that informed the trajectory of this project. The context of the research project is introduced with a reflection on the wider research partnership within which this project began and a personal reflection. This is followed by a description of my first encounter with the particular school context and information pertaining to the contextual landscape of 21st century teaching that is

gleaned from the literature. A preview of the stories to come and the overall structure and content of this thesis is provided at the end of this chapter.

An emergent and contextually bound approach to research.

An emergent approach was employed throughout this PhD project. As such, research aims and processes used to construct knowledge evolved over time in response to new contextually bound insights and learnings (Morgan, 2008). Research projects using an emergent approach are not intended to be replicable (St. Pierre & Jackson, 2014). The emergent approach of this PhD project is in keeping with a broader qualitative (Erickson, 2011), interpretivist (B. Wheeler & Murphy, 2016) research framework that acknowledges the position of the researcher in constructing knowledge. First-person language is used throughout this thesis to clearly express my position within the text and convey the conscious and ongoing process of reflexive analysis undertaken within this project. The emergence of the frame for a music therapist teacher support program described in this part of the story was based on an integrated reflection on knowledge about the literature pertaining to teacher support programs, my own position, and the particular context of this project.

The Building Schools Through the Arts research partnership.

The PhD project began as part of a wider research partnership between the University of Melbourne and two industry partners¹. The team of Building Schools Through the Arts (BuSTA) researchers sought to develop understandings about the conditions that promote the sustainability of school arts programs. An early phase of the BuSTA project entailed exploring understandings of sustainability in relation to school arts programs. Building teacher capacity was identified as one possible sustained outcome of externally provided school arts programs (McFerran, Crooke, & Hattie, 2017). This exploration involved BuSTA

¹ Industry partners included the governing body for the provision of catholic schools in Melbourne (Catholic Education Melbourne), and a not-for-profit provider of school arts programs (The Song Room).

researchers spending time engaging in participant observation of externally provided arts programs in four catholic primary schools.

I joined the BuSTA project as a PhD student. I held dual professionally accredited qualifications as a music therapist and teacher and had worked in various music therapy and teaching roles in the education system for over ten years. Through my work in both disciplines, I demonstrated a dedication towards critical and activist educational practices. I began this research project aiming to contribute to the development of knowledge about the sustainable provision of externally provided school arts programs. In particular, I was curious about the potential role of music therapists in supporting teachers to sustain outcomes after their engagement with a music therapist.

The following subsection presents a brief reflection on my professional history prior to this PhD project. Finlay (2002) suggests the importance of reflecting on both one's own lived experience as well as the research literature from the beginning of any research project in order to examine the assumptions and motivations that underlie the research. I consciously introduce a personal reflection at this early point of this thesis to illustrate the importance of "outing the researcher" and ongoing researcher reflexivity within this project (Finlay, 2002). I further wish to illuminate the interweaving of the personal and professional in my own learning journey.

My own professional history: A personal reflection.

I grew up the eldest of three daughters in a white Australian, middle-class, traditional family unit. Ever since I can remember I wanted to be a teacher. However, just before the end of my year 12 exams I learned of the profession of music therapy and changed my career aspirations. I applied for the music therapy training course, was accepted, and began studying to become a registered music therapist.

Five years later I began my professional life working part time as an eager (though naïve) music therapist in two special developmental schools for students with moderate to profound intellectual disabilities. After a few years building my skills at using music with students, mainly in group settings, I became disgruntled with the lack of agency I had to influence practice from my position in the school music room. I decided to re-train as a teacher and spent the next five years working fulltime as a classroom teacher, again in the special education sector. During this time, I had the opportunity to develop my knowledge of pedagogy while exploring the intersection of practice and principles I had learned from both my music therapy and teacher training. In particular, my humanistic orientation as a music therapist informed by the person-centred approach of Rogers (1967) now informed my approach to building relationships with my students as their teacher.

While I thrived with my own class group, the immense pressure of the teaching role took its toll on my own wellbeing. In my own experience, I can see many indicators of the neoliberal education climate that have been described to impact teacher wellbeing (Acton & Glasgow, 2015). The needs of my students seemed overwhelming. I used all my energy to try and support them in the way I had been trained, but felt I always fell short. The demands of paperwork and accountability measures grew and took more and more of my precious time. Stressed and anxious, I began to have difficulty sleeping, and became physically run down. Though I persisted with turning up to school each day, after over six months with a permanently hoarse voice and phlegm producing cough, I finally succumbed to illness and was hospitalised with tuberculosis. Thankfully, the prognosis was positive, and this experience provided me with the wake-up call I needed to prioritise my own health and wellbeing before I worked to support others.

Over the following years I focused my work on supporting teachers, through mentoring new graduate teachers in the school system and educating pre-service teachers on

developing their classroom practices. I was convinced that if I could support teachers, then they could in turn better support their students. Influenced by such critical inclusive education theorists such as Liasidou (2012) and Slee (2001) I began working to educate pre-service teachers to become engaged and inclusive teachers in spite of the dominant neoliberal schooling system. I began to form my belief that teachers hold a key to a more inclusive and well society. While I aimed to support teachers to learn to use transformative classroom practices that honoured the unique voices and abilities of their students, I was also passionate about enabling teachers to maintain their ability to “be well” in the classroom in a manner that I had not been able to achieve in my own career as a classroom teacher. I read up on literature about the concept of burnout; a term first coined to denote the long-term exhaustion and diminished interest in work often experienced by workers in the American public health system (Freudenberger, 1974). I drew on my own personal experience of narrowly escaping burnout to provide support to the teachers I was working with.

When the opportunity arose to contribute to the Building Schools Through the Arts project alongside music therapy scholars, I was excited to further explore the practice of music therapy in schools. On commencing PhD studies, the process of re-engaging with the music therapy literature was thrilling. Encouraged by my primary supervisor I explored the new body of scholarship pertaining to the community music therapy theoretical perspective that had emerged since my undergraduate training. I also familiarised myself with the exploration into consultative (Rickson, 2012) and collaborative (McFerran, Crooke, & Bolger, 2017) school-based music therapy practices that sought to provide support to teachers. I became increasingly curious about the potential for developing knowledge about how to further support the work teachers do in the contemporary classroom informed by music therapy.

An introduction to the context of this research project.

First encounters with the school context.

This research project took place in the context of a culturally diverse primary school in the northern suburbs of Melbourne, Australia, and the socio-political landscape of the 21st century education climate. Over the first year of my PhD studies I developed contextual knowledge that influenced the trajectory of this research project. Initially, my position as a student researcher contributing to the larger BuSTA research project gave me the opportunity to observe teachers' engagement in an externally provided dance program at a catholic primary school. I didn't know it at the time, but this was the same school in which I would ultimately conduct the exploration of a music therapist teacher support program for this PhD project. Observing the teachers engage with the dance program allowed me the chance to develop knowledge about the local school context (further outlined in Chapter Three) and guided my exploration of the literature.

Initially I explored literature pertaining to the wider educational context of 21st century teaching. Through examining this body of literature, I gained understandings about the widespread pressure placed on teachers in the current neoliberal education climate. Key learnings from reviewing this body of literature are presented below.

The context of 21st century teaching.

Hansen (2017) "illuminates the easy-to-overlook truth that it is persons, rather than roles as such, who educate" (p. 7). They further suggest that holding an intention to bear witness to the people holding the role of "teacher" may allow the personal self of teachers to be brought into the light. The following section is intended to begin the process of bearing witness to the experience of teachers in the landscape of 21st century teaching. A brief review of literature relating to two phenomena I experienced within my own career as a teacher and witnessed during my first encounter with the school context of this research project is

presented. In keeping with the intention to bear witness, the literature reviewed is positioned to focus on the experience of teachers, rather than the experience of students. An argument about the need for teachers to receive support with using creative classroom practices that meet the needs of all learners, as well as support with maintaining their own wellbeing is offered. This section ends with a review of professional learning programs that have been described to contribute towards supporting the needs of teachers.

Challenge of responding to increasingly diverse student needs.

A seminal report on Australian schooling described the ways in which the background and abilities of students in Australian classrooms have become increasingly diverse since the implementation of disability discrimination legislation in the late 20th century (Gonski et al., 2011). Since this time, teachers have been required to uphold the tenets of inclusive education by altering their use of classroom practices to address the needs of all students. A recent definition of inclusive education has called for continued “changes to culture, policy and practice of regular schools to accommodate and effectively include all students” (UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, 2016, p. 4). Within this definition of inclusive education, teachers are responsible for ensuring that each student has opportunities to learn in a manner that suits them, regardless of any aspect of their identity (including ability, race, gender, sexuality, socioeconomic status and others) (UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, 2016, p. 5). Despite this legislative requirement, many teachers remain ill equipped by their university training to effectively respond to the diverse needs of students in their classroom (Dally, Ralston, Strnadová, Dempsey, & Chambers, 2019). Furthermore, in addition to effectively responding to the learning needs of students with diagnosed disabilities, Brunzell, Stokes, and Waters (2016) describe the difficulty faced by teachers at accommodating the needs of the many students who have experienced trauma.

In the Australian context, Graham (2016) critiques an increase in the formal diagnosis of children who are seen to display behavioural, social or emotional difficulties in the classroom rather than viewing diverse student needs as the norm. Such an educational approach can be understood as ableist, as it perpetuates the practice of categorising students based on an assessment of their deficits rather than using the principles of inclusive education to meet the individual needs of students (Lalvani & Bacon, 2019). Slee (2014) further discusses the ways in which the educational needs of certain students are regularly deferred to experts outside of the classroom.

Several theorists suggest that school arts may be one possible way for teachers to enact contemporary inclusive educational practices. A special issue of the *International Journal of Inclusive Education* explored the possibility for arts practices to be used as pedagogical tools to explore exclusion and enact transformation in wide-ranging communities (Sonn & Baker, 2016). Indeed, artistic practices within school settings have been described to “offer an extraordinary inclusive potential by orienting the educator towards difference as ordinary and something to be expected and even sought” (Allan, 2014, p. 521). However, teachers’ ability to use the arts to enact inclusive education is perpetuated by the limited arts education for teacher trainees in university courses (Collins, 2016; McLaren & Arnold, 2016). A diminished confidence at integrating the arts into teaching practice is also described frequently in the literature (Barry & Durham, 2017; Lemon & Garvis, 2013; Webb, 2016). As Graham (2016) argues, given the widespread lack of educational inclusion, classroom-based support provided to teachers to assist them to modify curriculum guidelines and use creative pedagogies to respond to the diverse needs of students is warranted.

Pressures of a neoliberal education climate.

The impact of an international neoliberal ideology that seeks to commodify the education sector and leads schools to compete for student enrolments is widespread and pervasive (Connell, 2013). Slee (2014) argues that schools can enact the wider neoliberal societal discourse through encouraging diagnosis of students who experience educational difficulties so they may be exempt from testing regimes. Indeed, educational practices have been criticised both internationally (Liasidou, 2015, p. 93) and locally (McLaren & Arnold, 2016) for prioritising the preparation of students for performance on tests rather than catering for the context bound needs of the student and their unique identity. Such testing-focused teaching runs counter to the legislative requirements of inclusive education described above.

Rodriguez and Magill (2016) explain the ways in which hegemonic neoliberal ideologies are often perpetuated by teacher education courses. Furthermore, such neoliberal educational practices place significant pressure on teachers. In his seminal publication, Ball (2003) described the challenges faced by teachers in standards-driven schools in which “performativity is a technology, a culture and a mode of regulation that employs judgements, comparisons and displays as a means of incentive, control, attrition and change, based on rewards and sanctions” (p. 216). Performative school cultures can lead teachers to sense that they are constantly being judged. Teachers have also been described as reducing their creativity as they work to meet neoliberal standards of efficiency when preparing students for high stakes testing regimes (Van Droogenbroeck, Spruyt, & Vanroelen, 2014). The overarching pressure to prepare students for achievement on high stakes literacy and numeracy tests has contributed towards the displacement of arts learning from the everyday classroom (McLaren & Arnold, 2016).

Burnout has been described as common among members of the teaching profession in the current neoliberal climate (Chang, 2009) for whom daily teaching practice comprises high

levels of emotional labour. The intensification of the teaching profession through increased expectations and the high level of interpersonal relationships has also led to high rates of burnout within experienced teachers (Van Droogenbroeck et al., 2014). The professional obligation of complying with constantly changing accountability measures within the current education climate has been described as overwhelming for teachers (Ryan & Bourke, 2013), and many choose to leave the profession.

Though reliable data on teacher attrition rates in Australia is lacking (Mason & Matas, 2015), a report into early career teacher attrition rates concludes that several prevalent factors contribute towards Australian teachers leaving the profession (AITSL, 2016). These include the uncertainty of ongoing employment, and increasingly high teacher workload. However, Acton and Glasgow (2015) suggest that teachers who feel supported in the workplace are subsequently more likely to sustain their employment in the profession. Programs that support teachers with combatting the pressures of the neoliberal education climate and promote the wellbeing of teachers is therefore a crucial task in maintaining the work of schools.

An introduction to teacher support programs.

Teacher professional learning programs.

One possible means for supporting teachers documented in the literature is the delivery of targeted professional learning programs. Within this study, professional learning is understood to mean a deliberate and teacher-led process aiming to result in teachers' growth of skills and capacities. While the terms professional learning and professional development are often used interchangeably, I have chosen to align with the writing of Mockler (2013) and use the term 'learning' to signify the more active and teacher-driven understandings of the term commonly reflected in the literature within this thesis.

Passive and solo opportunities for teachers to attend one-off professional development seminars are commonplace in the present-day educational climate (Mockler, 2013). Mockler further notes that such professional development opportunities tend to position teacher training as a means of achieving performance goals. Performative “competency” driven models of teacher professional learning have been described to restrict teachers’ engagement with creative teaching and learning practices (Hatcher, 2011). Hatcher continues to outline that “professional learning for creativity is not reducible to the transfer and acquisition of pre-programmed knowledge”(p.404) and requires a sensitivity to the specific school and classroom context. By contrast, optimal professional learning includes opportunity to seek collaborative support from another professional within the context of the teachers’ own classroom (C. Stewart, 2014). It has also been described as important for teachers to have the chance to form a “community of practice” (Rosemary, Graham, Anneli, Seppo, & Pirjo-Liisa, 2009; Wenger, 1998) at their school in which they can share among their peers.

Some professional learning programs that support teachers to develop their use of inclusive and creative pedagogies have been documented in the literature. One study explored the perceptions of teachers who had participated in a professional learning program in which teachers collaborated with an artist-in-residence (Hunter, Baker, & Nailon, 2014). Through their engagement with the artist, teachers described the ways in which they had grown in confidence at using creative classroom pedagogies. Notably, some teachers also portrayed that the program had given them an important precursor to enacting inclusive teaching methods through “the opportunity to relate differently to their students and to value them in different ways” (p.83). Galton and Page (2015) outlined a similar program in which creative practitioners were employed in schools as a means of impacting on student wellbeing. The authors report that while some teachers were able to develop their ability to deliver flexible

and responsive learning activities through their work with the creative practitioners, other teachers continued to use traditional teaching practices.

Professional learning programs have also been described as contributing towards teachers' wellbeing. Foreman-Peck (2015) argues that the unpredictable nature of the challenges that impact on teachers' wellbeing necessitate personalised mentoring support. Furthermore, Wilkins, Busher, Kahkos, Mohamed, and Smith (2012) attest that teachers who are able to develop their own authentic teacher identity are more likely to remain resilient in the face of performative pressures. Assisting teachers to build self-efficacy (Brown, 2012) and promote resilience (Howard & Johnson, 2004) have all been argued to support teachers to be able to resist burnout. Supportive relationships with colleagues have also been shown to influence teachers' decisions to remain in the profession (Howes & Goodman-Delahunty, 2015).

Professional learning programs that acknowledge teachers' emotional needs (Yoo & Carter, 2017) and promote emotional regulation (Chang, 2009), have additionally been described as beneficial. McKay (2019) further suggests that the use of arts-based practices within professional learning can support teachers to engage in self-care practices.

Within this thesis, understandings of professional learning programs align with the perspective of Mockler (2013) who attests that effective teacher professional learning relates to teachers developing their identity as teacher. Mockler further argues that successful professional learning program sit "at the intersection of professional context and personal experience and requiring both professional and personal relevance to lead to changes in practice" (p. 42). This perspective is commensurate with the teacher support needs support with teaching practices and wellbeing identified in the literature as they appeared to relate to both the professional and personal domains. However, descriptions of professional learning programs that intended to support teachers' development of inclusive and creative teaching

practices while simultaneously addressing teacher personal wellbeing appeared to be lacking in the literature.

The exploration of a music therapist teacher support program.

Due to my own background as a music therapist working in schools, the opportunity to observe a school dance program also led me to consider the potential role of music therapists in supporting teachers and solidify my research aim of exploring a music therapist teacher support program. The decision-making processes I engaged in that led me from observing a dance program to actively facilitating a music therapist teacher support program are detailed in Chapter Two. The ways in which music therapists have previously attempted to support teachers has been well documented in the literature and are also outlined in Chapter Two. Within this thesis, it is argued that music therapists are well-placed to support teachers to develop their use of inclusive and creative teaching practices. It is further suggested that in doing so, music therapists may have a role in supporting teacher wellbeing and countering the dominant neoliberal narrative in schools that places significant pressure on teachers.

A preview of the rest of Part One of the story.

Chapter One of this thesis has begun to locate this research project through introducing information pertaining to the contextual landscape of this research project. The aim of this project in exploring a music therapy program for supporting teachers to use inclusive and creative teaching practices while also promoting teacher wellbeing has been identified.

Further knowledge that led to the emergence of the frame for the exploration of a music therapist teacher support program are described in the final two chapters of this part of the story. Chapter Two locates this research project within the music therapy literature base and presents the published article of this thesis; a critical interpretive synthesis of 40

publications pertaining to music therapist teacher support. Recommendations for future music therapist teacher support programs are offered.

Finally, Chapter Three presents the integration of contextually bound insights that led to the emergence of the specific field of study for the music therapist teacher support program explored within this research project. Understandings of key aspects of this frame; Music for Classroom Wellbeing Professional Learning, are presented.

The parts to come: An overview of the structure and content of this thesis.

The second part of this thesis includes two chapters pertaining to the approach to studying the Music for Classroom Wellbeing Professional Learning Program. A detailed explanation of the critical pragmatist philosophy and ethnographically informed methodological perspective of the research project is offered in Chapter Four. My position as “practitioner/scholar” who sought to transform unjust social structures through practical means (Bourgeois, 2010, p. 139) is outlined. Chapter Four also includes a description of the foundational tenets of this research project, which draws from the works of various foundational theorists from the fields of critical educational (Dewey, 2011; Freire, 1972; Liasidou, 2015) and community music therapy (Stige, Andsell, Elefant, & Pavlicevic, 2010). Chapter Five details the ethnographically informed research methods used within this study. This chapter includes a description of the fundamental components of the field of study, as well as the processes used to make meaning from the study of a professional learning program.

Chapters Six to Eight make up the third part of the story. These chapters present illustrations of the practice of supporting teachers through a series of crafted ethnographic accounts embedded with references to the literature. Each ethnographic account includes detail about the impact of the wider neoliberal educational climate on the teacher in their

classroom. The accounts also present the use of creative and inclusive practices informed by music therapy that took place within the professional learning program.

The final part of the story of this thesis includes a discussion of the implications of the theoretical understandings that emerged from this research project. The findings from a meta-ethnographic synthesis of the ethnographic accounts are presented in Chapter Nine. This chapter presents the practice principles that guided the facilitation of the Music for Classroom Wellbeing Professional Learning Program. A discussion of the implications of the research project on future practice are presented as a series of provocations in Chapter Ten. Chapter Eleven provides a personal reflection on the research project as a whole. Part of the personal reflection in this conclusive chapter takes the form of a “sung reflection” that arose from reflecting on what I have learned throughout this PhD project. This final sung reflection is offered as a performative illustration of the infinite different ways of sharing music, knowledge and personal self that are promoted within this thesis.

Chapter Two: A Critical Interpretive Synthesis on Literature Describing Music Therapist Teacher Support Programs

Chapter introduction.

This chapter presents the full text of a published article containing a critical interpretive synthesis of the literature pertaining to music therapist teacher support. This article describes the process of critically interrogating 40 publications containing descriptions of music therapists providing support to teachers. Through this process, three tensions were identified that had the potential to impact negatively on teachers’ sustainment of outcomes from the music therapist teacher support experience. The following chapter details the tensions identified in the literature, and recommendations for future music therapist teacher support programs. As noted in the Preface section of this thesis, the text for this chapter has been directly lifted from the published article. Therefore, within this chapter the first person

voice of this thesis has been replaced with a third person voice to reflect the article authorship.

Rationale for the critical interpretive synthesis.

The Building Schools Through the Arts research project.

This article seeks to contribute a critical review on a selection of publications pertaining to the practices of music therapists working in schools. Within this publication the phrase “music therapist teacher support” has been used to refer to any instance in which the music therapist intended to impart knowledge, skills or guidance to a teacher through their interaction. These programs have previously been framed in various ways, such as music therapy consultation, interactive therapeutic music skill-sharing, and community music therapy informed collaboration. The synthesised findings of this review are offered in response to three tensions that emerged from critical engagement with this body of literature. These tensions related to the focus, frame and intended outcomes of the descriptions of music therapist teacher support in the publications reviewed.

The impetus for engaging in a critical reading of this body of literature emerged soon after the first author had joined the second and third authors in a research project labelled Building Schools Through the Arts (BuSTA) which was funded by the Australian Research Council. The project involved our team of music therapy scholars working with industry partners to explore factors that help and hinder the sustainability of school arts programs, specifically those with a wellbeing focus.

The team of BuSTA researchers began their investigations with the shared assumption that school arts programs can contribute to a plethora of benefits for student learning and wellbeing (Crooke, 2016). Despite these benefits, many schools in our home country of Australia currently opt to outsource the delivery of short-term arts programs to external providers. The trend toward external arts provision can be explained by a range of systemic

factors reported in the literature, including a lack of teacher training in arts provision (Collins, 2016) and generalist teachers' subsequent lack of confidence at using arts in their classrooms (Lemon & Garvis, 2013). Thus, the BuSTA researchers sought to glean more information about how to facilitate school arts programs in ways that maximised the possibility of participating schools building sustained internal capacity for arts provision.

First author Meg² joined the BuSTA research project as a PhD candidate eager to contribute her perspective as both a professionally accredited music therapist and teacher who had worked in both special and mainstream³ education settings. Her interest was piqued by the findings of a small qualitative scoping study conducted at the beginning of the project. Specifically, interviews with stakeholders at 19 schools revealed that one potential sustained outcome from school arts programs delivered by external providers was the internal capacity of teachers to deliver the arts (McFerran, Crooke, & Hattie, 2017). Meg knew that several music therapists had written about striving to support teachers to develop their ability to use music in their classroom through consultative practices. This awareness spurred her to focus her PhD study on furthering knowledge about sustainable music therapist teacher support programs. Further it became apparent that her positioning as a music therapist and teacher offered a unique vantage point to research the topic of music therapist teacher support. The following section of this paper presents a brief introduction to the practice of music therapist teacher support in schools. The rationale for engaging in a critical interpretive synthesis on this body of literature based on Meg's experience of observing a school dance program as part of the BuSTA research project is then outlined.

² Meg is the first author and the PhD Candidate involved in this research. We have chosen to use her name to ensure that her presence is reflexively noted in the text. This PhD research is supported by an Australian Government Research Training Program Scholarship.

³ In the Australian context, the term "mainstream" is used to refer to a non-special education school setting. All students who reside in the local area are welcomed to enrol in a mainstream school.

Informing literature: Music therapist teacher support.

There is a long history of school-based music therapy practice across a range of special education (McFerran & Elefant, 2012), alternative (F. Baker & Jones, 2006) and mainstream (Wigram & Carr, 2009) school settings. Within traditional school music therapy programs, the registered music therapist works directly with students either individually or in groups. However, over the past 20 years authors have increasingly described school-based music therapy programs in which the music therapist intends to provide support to teachers as an alternative model of practice.

Motivations for music therapist teacher support.

Music therapist teacher support typically involves the delivery of a short-term program in which the music therapist provides consultation and training to classroom or music teachers. The support offered by music therapists to teachers takes many varied forms and seeks to address a range of educational, developmental, therapeutic and wellbeing related student needs. Music therapist teacher support has traditionally intended to develop teachers' ability to use music with their students through the use of active music-making or music-listening activities.

The first descriptions of music therapist teacher support coincide with the advent of antidiscrimination legislation in the late 20th century (Australian Government, 1992). At this time, Australian students with diagnosed disabilities and impairments were first able to attend their local mainstream school. This shift towards inclusive education sparked new work possibilities for music therapy service delivery in schools (Johnson, 1996). Subsequently, multiple authors proposed that music therapists were well positioned to support music (Bunt, 2003; Darrow, 1999) and generalist classroom teachers (Jones & Cardinal, 1998) to develop their ability at incorporating music into their classroom as a means of including all students. This intention remains relevant for contemporary music therapy practice in schools, as

teachers continue to require classroom-based support to uphold inclusive education legislation (Graham, 2016).

Supporting teachers through consultation programs was additionally suggested as a way for music therapists to retain professional relevance and maintain opportunities for employment alongside the movement of students with disabilities to mainstream school settings (D. Smith & Hairston, 1999). Indeed, facilitating short-term consultancy programs can open up another avenue for music therapists who find it difficult to source ongoing paid work in schools. Furthermore, music therapist teacher support programs can provide a pragmatic solution to the lack of access to music therapy services for students in many school settings, as there are simply not enough registered music therapists to service each school (Rickson, 2008). This insight inspired Rickson (2010a) to develop a consultation protocol in which she described processes for working with teaching staff to improve their ability to include students with high support needs through the use of music. Another application of music therapist teacher support outlined in the literature refers to work with school staff outside the therapists' country of origin (Bolger & McFerran, 2013; Coombes, 2011; Coombes & Tombs-Katz, 2009; Margetts, Wallace, & Young, 2013; McFerran & Hunt, 2008; Quin & Rowland, 2016; Rickson, 2009; Winter, 2015). These international programs typically take place at schools in geographical locations that do not readily have access to music therapy. Several authors have described international programs in which music therapists aim to support teachers to use music therapeutically in order to address issues of trauma or grief experienced by school students in addition to promoting inclusivity (Coombes, 2011; Margetts et al., 2013; McFerran & Hunt, 2008).

More recently, McFerran and Rickson (2014) have explicitly introduced a community music therapy orientation to school-based practice in an attempt to foster the development of flourishing school musical cultures. A community oriented practice involves spending time in

the school environment to identify interested staff member advocates, or “players” (Rickson & McFerran, 2014, p. 46) rather than offering training and support to all staff. When music therapists do aim to support teachers within community music therapy oriented school programs, attempts are made to build collaborative partnerships with teachers rather than positioning as an “expert professional”(McFerran & Rickson, 2014, p. 79). Indeed, collaborating with teachers who are engaged partners has been described as being a critical component of successful community music therapy framed school programs (McFerran, Crooke, & Bolger, 2017).

The challenge of sustaining outcomes from music therapist teacher support.

One often implicit intention of music therapist teacher support is that teachers will not only develop their ability to implement musical engagements with their students, but that these outcomes will be sustained after the music therapist leaves the school. Over the past decade, music therapists have written about the importance of sustainable program design as an ethical aspect of short-term music therapy projects in schools (Bolger & McFerran, 2013; McFerran & Rickson, 2014; Quin & Rowland, 2016). Some instances of teachers sustaining their use of musical practices after engaging in music therapist teacher support are presented in the literature. Shrubsole (2015) describes an example of a classroom teacher sustaining her ability to facilitate and adapt active music making with her students learned through her collaboration with a consulting music therapist. Furthermore, findings from an evaluation of multiple international skill-sharing projects (some of which took place with teachers) indicated that local partners were able to sustain developments in their use of musical skills after training delivered by the visiting music therapist (Quin & Rowland, 2016).

In general, however, sustaining outcomes for teachers through music therapist teacher support programs has been shown to be a challenging undertaking. For example, Coombes and Tombs-Katz (2009) describe the sharing of music therapy practices at two schools on the

West Bank. Over a six-week period, music therapist Coombes worked with a group of teachers and social workers to build their ability to implement musical activities with their students. On returning to one of the schools five months after the training program had taken place, Coombes discovered that the group of classroom teachers who had taken part in the therapeutic music skill-sharing program were no longer responsible for the music program. In this case, the role of music session facilitator had been passed on to a social worker participant of the program. The authors deduced that relying on one staff member to carry on the use of music was a problematic outcome as there was a possibility that they could leave the school or stop running the music program. Limiting the delivery of music to one staff member also appeared to have restricted the access of students to music-making activities. This discovery aligns with an early finding from BuSTA research project investigation exploring the sustainability of school arts programs. Similarly, it was often found that sustainable provision of an arts program within a school was dependent on the presence and energy of a sole “passionate” member of staff (McFerran, Crooke, & Hattie, 2017).

Additionally, when reporting on four classroom teachers’ perceptions of the music therapy consultation process they had facilitated, Rickson and Twyford (2011) shared that three of the teachers found it difficult to carry on with music after the program had ceased. McFerran et al. (2015) have also reported that teachers were not able to adapt musical activities learned with the support of a music therapist to the needs of the students in their new class group. It is contended that further inquiry into the factors that help and hinder teachers from sustaining outcomes when participating in music therapist teacher support programs is warranted.

Impetus for the critical interpretive synthesis.

A music therapist observing a dance program.

One of an initial four school arts programs investigated in the BuSTA research was a dance program facilitated by a teaching artist employed by one of the research partners, The Song Room. The aim of the program was for the teaching artist to introduce the students to dance while simultaneously supporting classroom teachers to develop their ability to use dance activities as part of their own teaching practice. DeWalt and DeWalt (2011) outline various methods of observation that can be used to study the practices used in a given context. Informed by these methods, Meg became a participatory observer of the dance program to learn more about what factors helped and hindered the success of this second aim.⁴ Meg took written field notes focusing on behavioural observations and interactions between participants in the dance program. She also dialogued extensively with teachers across each day and made notes of these conversations.

The dance program took place one day a week over two school terms at a large and culturally diverse primary school in the northern suburbs of Melbourne, Australia. The dance teaching artist worked with six groups of grades three and four students and their teachers. In the second half of the program the dance teaching artist worked to teach choreographed song, dance and acting routines to each year level of students for performance at the whole school production.

An outsider perspective.

We approached the research from a constructivist perspective as described by Lincoln and Guba (2000), recognising that the creation of knowledge was subjective. In this study,

⁴ Ethical approval for undertaking data collection for this study was granted by the University of Melbourne humanities and applied sciences human ethics sub-committee (Project 1545449.4) and Catholic Education Melbourne Analysis, Policy & Research Team (Project 2165) (see Appendix A for approval letters).

interpretations were shaped by our own collective experiences as researchers and music therapists / teachers / musicians in schools.

Finlay (2002) noted the importance of interpretivist researchers questioning the way their own subjective experiences influence data collection and meaning making processes. Throughout the dance program we engaged in continual reflexive inquiry about aspects of the program perceived to be either helping or hindering the teachers in engaging with the program, and developing their ability to use dance. Meg reflected on the dance program in her notes and interview transcripts independently and in regular supervision sessions in order to consider possibilities for how to respectfully make sense of this experience to inform her PhD project exploring music therapist teacher support programs.

Margetts et al. (2013) discussed the need for humility when engaging in research with a community with a cultural background other than one's own. Through further reflection, Meg realised that she had assumed that the dance teaching artist would facilitate the program in a similar way as herself as a trained music therapist and teacher, which had not been the case. This insight caused her to become aware of her lack of dance training and the fact that she only had limited knowledge of publications describing collaboration between teachers and dance movement therapists. Meg therefore consciously endeavored to refrain from commenting on the facilitation of a dance program by a teaching artist with entirely different training and practice base to herself as a registered music therapist and teacher. Instead, Meg came to believe that holding a researcher role provided a rare opportunity to focus attention on the experience of the teachers involved in the dance program. This focus on teachers' participation reduced the possibility of being distracted by the content of the dance activities themselves or the task of facilitating the program.

At the conclusion of the dance program, Meg conducted open-ended interviews with five of the classroom teachers and two members of the school leadership team to capture

more information about their experiences. At this point, only one of the five classroom teachers described being able to embed dance into their everyday classroom teaching practice.

Reflecting on the teachers' words in light of her own experience allowed Meg to notice ways in which the program facilitator had focused the dance sessions on teaching the students rather than addressing the professional needs of teachers. She realised that an opportunity had been missed to get to know the teachers at the start of the program that seemed to limit their engagement. This missed opportunity appeared to have had a flow-on effect through planning and implementation stages of the program. Recognizing that the program facilitator had forgone addressing the needs of teachers led Meg to contemplate that a consideration of the needs of teachers may have been similarly omitted from previous descriptions of music therapist teacher support. These understandings inspired a return to the music therapy literature with a critical lens to investigate the guiding question: How have teachers been described in publications referring to music therapist teacher support?

Method.

Critical interpretive synthesis.

The method of critical interpretive synthesis initially described by Dixon-Woods et al. (2006) was employed as a means of developing a synthesised response to our guiding question about the representation of teachers in the music therapist teacher support literature. Meg's approach was also informed by the work of several music therapy authors who have used the critical interpretive synthesis process in recent years as a means of problematising hidden assumptions within an existing body of literature. In particular, she chose to align the methods involved in our critical interpretive synthesis with the structure proposed by music therapy scholars McFerran, Hense, Medcalf, Murphy, and Fairchild (2017). This included becoming cognizant of our particular approach and perspective, as described earlier, and

subsequently identifying publications for review. Meg then engaged in an iterative process of interrogating the literature before finally synthesising her interpretations of the analysis. The second and third authors provided supervisory support throughout this process, and contributed towards editing the synthesised findings.

Identification of publications for review.

Publications were identified for review through an iterative process. Firstly, academic databases were searched for English language publications using a keyword combination of “music therapy” and “school/s”. In keeping with the intention to explore the representation of teacher support, any references that detailed a music therapist intentionally imparting knowledge or skills to a teacher through their interaction in a mainstream school setting were kept for review. It is acknowledged that not all of the papers included in this critical review used the same terms to describe the interaction between music therapist and teacher. However, for the purpose of clarity, within this critical interpretive synthesis, any publications that made mention of a music therapist intending to impart knowledge or skills to a teacher were categorised as “music therapist teacher support” and were retained for interrogation.

Identified manuscripts included several papers in which the support relationship between music therapist and teachers was suggested rather than described (Bunt, 2003; E. J. Kim, 2009; McFerran & Wölfl, 2015; Nocker-Ribaupierre & Wölfl, 2010) as well as articles that highlighted the perspectives of other members of the school community and included mention of teacher support practices (Rickson & Twyford, 2011; Ropp, Caldwell, Dixon, Angell, & Vogt, 2006; Twyford, 2012). Papers that outlined music therapy work in a special education or alternative school setting and referred specifically to skill sharing between music therapist and teacher were also included. Publications that also referred to music therapists supporting education support and social work staff in addition to teachers were

similarly retained. By contrast, research papers in which teachers had merely taken part in the collection of research data or were mentioned in passing were discarded. In response to the first inductive interrogation of identified publications, three additional papers which explored the relationship between music education and music therapy (Mitchell, 2016; Robertson, 2000; Woodward, 2000) were also included for review. Each reference list in the selected publications was then scanned for further publications pertaining to music therapy work in schools. In total, 40 publications ranging from 1996 to 2018 were ultimately selected for review and are marked with an asterisk* in the reference list.

Interrogation of the literature.

The process of analysis began with Meg reading back over field notes and interview transcripts from the dance program and identifying aspects that appeared to have helped or hindered teachers' engagement and subsequent sustained development. These insights were used to create a series of questions to explore in the literature. Information from the 40 publications was extracted into a spreadsheet to respond to the questions noted in Table 1.3.

These initial questions formed two overlapping and intersecting foci of interrogation for extracting information from the publications. Firstly, Meg paid attention to the descriptions of teachers within the literature across the stages of the music therapist teacher support presented in the publications. In line with the critical perspective of this review, this process included being mindful of instances in which teachers were not described as well as instances where they were. Additionally, Meg explored explicit or implied descriptions of factors that appeared to either help or hinder teachers' engagement in the process of providing support to teachers and any subsequent sustained outcomes.

Rather than attempting to exclude personal thoughts and feelings from the review, Meg drew on personal responses to problematise the current presentation of music therapist teacher support in schools and explore new ways of thinking. McFerran, Hense, et al. (2017)

have shared the benefits of paying close attention to embodied emotional responses when reviewing publications within a critical interpretive synthesis of the literature. Meg's responses were noted in a separate column in the spreadsheet, and we continued to have reflexive conversations about what those responses could suggest about what was absent or misrepresented in the literature, as well as what appeared to be incongruent with promoting the sustainment of outcomes.

The interpretive process of critically reflecting on the literature involved reading and re-reading each publication to obtain information and insights and developing new iterations of the initial questions listed in Table 1.3. For example, through responding to the questions in Table 1.3, Meg noticed that teachers did not appear to be the focus of the music therapy teacher consultation programs. This realization led Meg to perceive a sense of discomfort about the way educative concepts such as curriculum were presented within the publications. A set of additional questions, presented in Table 1.4, was therefore developed to further interrogate the literature related to the use of language when planning for and evaluating programs. At this stage, the body of literature for this inquiry was widened to include publications that explored the presentation of educative concepts more generally, (as mentioned previously in the section above titled "identification of publications for review"). Once again, Meg explored explicit or implied descriptions of ways in which educative concepts were described, as well as ways in which these descriptions appeared to have related to factors that helped or hindered teachers' engagement and sustained outcomes.

Table 1.3

Initial Questions Used to Interrogate how Teachers were Described in the Literature

How were program intentions described?	How were teachers described?	What were goals for teachers?	How did music therapists and teachers negotiate goals and program content?	How were teachers involved in program implementation?	What outcomes were described for teachers?	What appeared to help / hinder teachers' engagement?	What appeared to help / hinder sustained outcomes for teachers?	What is my embodied response?
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Table 1.4

Additional Questions Used to Interrogate how Language Related to Program Planning and Evaluation was Presented in the Literature

How are the needs of the focus person / people presented?	How are student goals framed?	How are teacher goals framed?	How are outcomes described?
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Synthesising the interpretation of the analysis.

After data had been extracted, a further iteration of analysis began by reflecting on responses to each question across the body of publications as a whole. This involved grouping our responses to each of the questions together and searching for commonalities, as well as further reflecting on the underlying assumptions that appeared to have shaped the construction of this body of literature. Through this process, three overarching tensions were identified that would be likely to impact negatively on teachers' sustainment of outcomes from the music therapist teacher support experience. These tensions related to the focus of the program itself, the frame of student goals and intended outcomes for staff learning. These tensions are presented in synthesised form in the following section of this paper alongside a discussion of key learnings gleaned from reflecting on these findings.

Findings and discussion.

Tension between the needs of students and teachers.

Overwhelming focus on student needs.

The first major tension identified within this critical interpretive synthesis was between the needs of the teachers participating in the music therapist teacher support, and the needs of their students. We noticed that, on the whole, in spite of the intention to support teachers to develop outcomes from the process, identifying the needs of teachers was not prioritised within music therapist teacher support programs. When references to teacher needs were present, authors tended to portray ways in which teachers were able to cope with challenging work conditions, rather than strengths or personal experience with music. For example, Coombes and Tombs-Katz (2009) outlined the way "Teachers and social workers working in this environment face daily challenges associated with stress and anxiety" (p.3). Brotons (2001) similarly reported the prevalence of teachers experiencing stress and burnout.

Conversely, authors overwhelmingly described the identification of student needs as the initial focus for their music therapy work with teachers. For example, when writing about her music therapy school consultation protocol, Rickson (2012) noted the importance of collating data pertaining to each individual student and conducting environmental and clinical music therapy assessment processes with students. Indeed, the identification of the individual needs of students can be seen as in keeping with the traditional practice of music therapy in schools (McFerran, 2014, p. 328). However, it seemed that initial identification of the needs of particular students in the classroom was often incongruent with the intentions of supporting teachers to develop their use of inclusive practices. In the mid 1990s, Jones (1996) identified the importance of reflecting on the shift towards inclusive music therapy practice in schools by asking "How do you transition services toward inclusive environments when the services it delivers have historically been associated with institutional-like settings?" (p. 44). McFerran and Rickson (2014) proposed an answer to this question by changing the focus of music therapy school programs in schools from identifying student issues to "getting a feel" for the needs of the whole school community (p.68). However, in practice, work in this space (McFerran, Crooke, & Bolger, 2017) has still seemed to prioritise student needs over those of staff members.

Furthermore, the enduring initial focus on student needs perceived within the literature seemed to have a direct impact on the experience of the participating teachers. In one publication, Rickson and Twyford (2011) asked school staff members for their perspective on outcomes from a music therapy consultation program. They discovered that despite positive outcomes for students, teachers and support staff stated that their work conditions made it difficult to carry on the music once the music therapist had left the school. One teacher described how although she was receptive to ideas suggested by the music therapist consultant, "apart from the odd thing we haven't really instigated anything that we

got from the music program, because we can't" (Rickson & Twyford, 2011, p. 75-76). This raises the question of whether shifting the initial focus of the consultation program to the identification of teacher needs would have allowed the music therapist to determine the kinds of activities that the teachers might have been able to instigate in their school context, and in turn yielded a different result.

In a later publication, Twyford and Rickson (2013) proposed that:

To be empowered to feel and act in 'naturally' musical ways, and to not only maintain but develop their use of music, individual staff members might need the carefully planned support of a music therapy consultant, offered within a confidential consultation relationship, focused specifically on them, rather than the child (p.133).

We agree with this statement, and through critical reflection noticed that ways in which the focus of teacher support was depicted within this body of literature did not always appear to be compatible with the needs of participating teachers.

With further immersion in the literature, it also became clear that very few publications explicitly detailed ways in which teachers even volunteered to participate in the music therapist teacher support process. In their description of a music therapy program exploring music therapy for grief and loss with students in Ireland, McFerran & Hunt (2008) shared that despite attempts by the music therapist to prepare staff members to carry on with addressing the issues identified through music therapy, this did not ensue. The authors postulated that "too much responsibility had been placed on an unwilling school community, which resulted in a lack of ongoing action" (p.49). This insight named the crucial importance of what Bolger later referred to as community "buy in" (Bolger, McFerran, & Stige, 2018) when engaging stakeholders in collaborative music therapy projects striving for sustained outcomes. It is suggested that voluntary participation in the music therapist teacher support process is a likely prerequisite of teachers' development of sustained outcomes.

Lack of attention to teachers' musical and professional needs.

Several authors of more recent publications reviewed have suggested that building strong positive relationships with school staff members (Twyford & Rickson, 2013), and drawing on the strengths and resources of school staff (McFerran, Crooke, & Bolger, 2017; McFerran & Rickson, 2014; McFerran et al., 2015) are vital for successful music therapist teacher collaboration. Yet, the critical review process also allowed us to bring to light several instances within the literature in which the music therapist did not appear to be supportive of teachers' musical and professional needs. For example, it is common practice within music therapy to engage participants in building confidence through use of their preferred musical material and instruments (B. L. Wheeler, 2015, p. 451). However, with the exception of the intercultural skill sharing projects outlined by Quin and Rowland (2016), descriptions of the use of teacher preferred instruments and musical material was lacking within this body of literature.

Some authors describing music therapist teacher support programs explained that music making needed to take place out of the classroom as the musical activities were either too noisy (Suh, 2015) or too difficult to manage inside a classroom (Rickson & Twyford, 2011; Twyford, 2012). However, it is argued that leaving the classroom within a music therapist teacher support program is likely to have a detrimental effect on the teachers' sustained skills. This is because a teacher is unable to leave students unsupervised in the classroom, and rarely has the chance to engage 1:1 with students.

Many authors alluded to the difficulty of engaging in ongoing conversations with teachers due to time constraints faced by both teachers and music therapists. When outlining a community music therapy approach to teacher support, McFerran and Rickson (2014) suggested dialoguing with school leadership at the start of a program to build understanding of the importance of making time to meet with teachers. However, few publications overtly

included description of such meetings as part of the process of music therapist teacher support. It is extrapolated that starting music therapist teacher support with a focus on teacher needs may be an important practical step in promoting sustained outcomes from such programs.

Through questioning the initial focus of music therapist teacher support programs we do not wish to imply that the needs of teachers are somehow more important than the needs of students, or that the needs of students and teachers are not interconnected within a classroom setting. However, it is proposed that the order in which music therapists focus on the needs of teachers and students should differ depending on who is the intended primary recipient of the music therapists' support. When the intention is to provide support to teachers so they may sustain outcomes from the music therapy program, we argue that the primary focus is the teacher. Focusing directly on the teacher is then more likely to result in sustained practices and benefits. Students also stand to greatly benefit from such a shift in focus.

Tension between therapeutic and educative frames.

Frame of goals for students.

The second major tension identified through this critical interpretive synthesis was between use of therapeutic and educative frames for planning and evaluation. One commonly understood aspect of music therapist teacher support was that a music therapist partners with teachers to set goals for students based on an assessment of students' needs. The music therapist then supports the teacher to address these goals through music making, regularly evaluating progress and changing goals as needed. However, through critically reading the literature we noticed that framing student goals as therapeutic seemed to restrict the potential for effective collaboration with teachers, and subsequent sustained teacher outcomes. Furthermore, we identified that student goals set by music therapists did not always appear to align with teachers' professional obligations.

Several authors have differentiated between educative and therapeutic frames for the student goals set within descriptions of music therapist teacher support. For example, Bunt (2003), stated that when working in schools "the [music] therapist is challenged to consider the relationship between therapeutic objectives and a more educational framework" (p. 189). The difference between education and therapy has been described as "a difficulty" by Pellitteri (2000, p. 389). Annesley (2014) additionally noted that "sometimes my role can involve allowing things to happen in therapy which might not be accepted in the classroom" (p.37).

This distinction between therapeutic and educational goals for students was often also acknowledged through comparing music education and music therapy programs. Some authors described a certain level of overlap between music education and music therapy yet proposed that each discipline had its own unique goals for students (Bunt, 2003; J. Smith, 2017). For example, several authors have attempted to point out the difference between addressing student learning of music curriculum through music education and addressing therapeutically oriented extra-musical student goals through music therapy (Brotons, 2001; Montgomery & Martinson, 2006; J. Smith, 2017).

A further illustrative example of the differences between frames for goals used by music therapists and teachers was presented in a comparison of outcomes from two drumming groups addressing a school violence prevention initiative (Suh, 2015, p. 78). Within this program Suh noted that, contrary to music education, student participation in music therapy did not relate to the attainment of grades. Mitchell (2016) also pointed out that "a common distinction between music education and music therapy is the fact that education necessitates attainment of predetermined standards" (p.35). However, Suh also noted that, when facilitating a therapeutic drumming group "the music teacher's approach was more focused on educative goals" whereas the consulting music "therapist was trained to be more

focused on the individual's emotional status than the school music teacher" (pp. 75-76). This paragraph reminded Meg of the differing professional roles held by music therapists and teachers working to address student goals in a school context. It also seemed that debating the differences between the relative merits of therapeutically and educatively framed student goals often seemed to contribute towards an unhelpful dichotomy between therapy and education. This dichotomy in turn detracted from the ability of music therapists to support the work of teachers.

Furthermore, it seemed that some authors prioritised their own therapeutic agendas to further the profession of music therapy which served to limit their ability to effectively collaborate with teachers. For example, Woodward (2000) stated that knowledge of both education and therapy practice is needed when working with teachers. However, her suggestion that "therapy is more important than teaching because learning and teaching opportunities arise naturally from therapy" (p.97) is problematic in a school context in which the primary aim is the education of students delivered by teaching staff. By contrast, more recent publications demonstrated the evolution of music therapist teacher support towards a greater consideration of the school context in which the work takes place. Mitchell's (2016) contention that "music therapists do not have a monopoly on music's therapeutic potential and affordances" (2016, p. 34) seems a more helpful starting point for music therapists aiming to support teachers, and more amenable to the development of collaborative partnerships. While music therapists are obviously aware that the professional role of teachers is to educate students, greater consideration of the many aspects encompassed within a teaching role is warranted when developing school-based programs that involve providing support to our teaching colleagues. Thus, we contend that setting student goals with a therapeutic frame is incongruent with our understanding of the fundamental aim of music therapist teacher support programs - supporting teachers with their professional responsibility

to teach. Instead, music therapists are encouraged to partner with teachers to set educationally framed student learning intentions, as per teachers' professional obligations.

Naming a tension between therapeutically and educatively framed goals within this literature base is not intended to imply a hierarchical relationship between therapy and education, nor suggest that setting therapeutically oriented goals for student growth is not a valuable and much needed intention for music therapy programs in schools. However, in rejecting the assumption that student needs must be prioritised over teacher needs, working with teachers to set educationally framed learning intentions for their students is vital. Furthermore, supporting teachers to set educatively framed student learning intentions is expected to contribute to teachers' sustainment of developments from the music therapist teacher support program after it has ceased.

In her book about music therapy group work in special education, Goodman (2007) acknowledged that the way goals are required by the school setting can challenge the clinical orientation of the consulting music therapist. However, she also pragmatically cautioned the reader that "*goal-setting need not define the therapist's way of working*" (p.115, original italics). It is thus proposed that supporting teachers to set student learning intentions has the potential to remove responsibility for measuring student progress from the role of the music therapist. This shift has the potential to mitigate any potential challenges experienced by music therapists who do not feel that measuring student educational progress aligns with their professional training as a music therapist.

Music therapists who feel challenged by the prospect of supporting teachers to set educationally framed student learning intentions are encouraged to develop their knowledge of therapeutically oriented and critical approaches to education. Indeed, Mitchell (2016) presented a case for therapeutic education that uses the affordances of music, and posed the

question "Just as learning opportunities arise naturally in therapy, what if opportunities for therapeutic growth arise naturally in teaching?" (p. 26).

Presentation of the concept of "curriculum".

One of the key aspects of a teachers' professional role involves the education of students related to the relevant curriculum framework. Engaging in this critical review allowed the identification of some challenges with the current understandings of the educative concept of "curriculum" presented in the body of literature.

Some publications outlined ways in which session goals could be aligned with music curriculum (Brotons, 2001; Chester, Holmberg, Lawrence, & Thurmond, 1999), or suggested that music therapy could address students' personal and social learning (Bunt, 2003; Robertson, 2000). Meg reflected that music therapists sometimes use the word "curriculum" with a rigidity that is different to the way a trained teacher might understand it. For example, when reporting on community music therapy oriented work across four mainstream school settings, McFerran, Crooke, and Bolger (2017) explained that "some programs crossed the boundaries between structured curricular activities and the more emergent, creatively driven ones" (p. 17). This description contrasts with the idea reflected in current local curriculum guidelines: while teachers are required to use curriculum guidelines to frame learning activities, curriculum use has no bearing on how teachers organise learning activities (Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority, 2015). As such, addressing the curriculum does not need to prohibit emergent and creatively driven ways of learning.

In her chapter about the possible forms of music therapy service delivery, Johnson (1996) explained that learning goals for students who require the regular curriculum to be modified to suit their needs are outlined in an "individualized education plan" or IEP (p.71). Several authors described music therapy consultation programs where content was framed according to the IEPs of individual students (Brotons, 2001; Chester et al., 1999; Goodman,

2007; Twyford & Rickson, 2013). However, these authors did not include information about how IEP goals connected to the overarching curriculum framework used by the whole class. For example, Rickson and Twyford (2011) presented four case examples of music therapy consultation to address the IEP goals of students with additional needs. The authors concluded that “Although some ideas could be taken into the classroom, the group activities were difficult to manage in a class of twenty-five children” (p.72). We agree that music therapists have specialised knowledge that can support the inclusion of students with a range of individual needs. However, this oversight seemed to restrict the potential for the classroom teacher to uphold inclusive education legislation (UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, 2016) by engaging the whole class group in musical activities suggested by the music therapist.

We realised through reflecting on language used to describe planning and evaluation in the music therapist teacher support literature that music therapists could benefit from a greater knowledge of curriculum. In particular, it would likely be helpful for music therapists to deepen their understanding of the relevant curriculum framework in their own setting. This knowledge would likely assist them to support teachers to develop educatively framed student learning intentions to address in their work together.

Tension between intended and sustained teacher outcomes.

Intended outcomes for teachers.

Reconceptualising the primary aims of music therapist teacher support as assisting teachers with their task of educating students led us to critically re-examine descriptions of teacher learning goals presented in the literature. This investigation revealed that learning goals for staff almost always related to skill development to address identified student needs rather than the professional learning needs of the teachers. When writing about facilitating in-services for teachers, Heine (1996) reminded readers to “recognise teachers as adult learners

who bring to the in-service a host of ideas, experiences, needs and strengths” (p.95). Some publications aligned with this statement and presented what appeared to be highly collaborative and teacher focused processes for determining staff goals related to the overall focus on building inclusivity (Rickson, 2010a), or therapeutic growth for students (Coombes, 2011). At other times authors mentioned the ways in which music therapists used their expert knowledge to suggest possible goals for teachers. From there, teachers set professional learning goals based on the areas of practice they needed to develop in order to best serve their students. It is therefore suggested that collaborating with teachers to set intentions for their own learning may support both teacher engagement and the likelihood of sustained outcomes from the process.

Again, this is not to suggest a hierarchical relationship between teacher and student needs in which one is prioritised at the expense of the other. Rather, it is advised that working alongside teachers to set professional learning intentions within music therapist teacher support programs may potentially mitigate the challenges reported within the literature of teachers not being able to sustain outcomes from their interaction with the music therapist.

Descriptions of sustained outcomes for teachers.

As previously outlined, many authors commented that teachers found it difficult to sustain gains in their ability to use music with their students after the program had ended. However, there were some positive additional sustained outcomes described in the literature. McFerran, Crooke, and Bolger (2017) outlined ways in which one wellbeing coordinator was now targeting a wider group of students with her music program. Coombes and Tombs-Katz (2009) shared that staff were now using music to assist with management of student behaviour, commenting that the music therapist teacher support program may have contributed to them developing confidence in this area.

Another powerful sustained outcome presented in several publications was that the music therapist teacher support programs exposed staff members to other ways of seeing and being with students. Some authors reported that the music therapist teacher support programs provided an alternative framework for understanding a child with additional needs (Pellitteri, 2000) and showed teachers about specific talents of students (Coombes & Tombs-Katz, 2009; Rickson & Twyford, 2011). Others described staff changing ways in which they spoke to students after engaging in the music therapy program (McFerran et al., 2015) and referred to improved relationships between staff and students (Margetts et al., 2013; McFerran, Crooke, & Bolger, 2017; Rickson, 2009). Coombes and Tombs-Katz (2009) mentioned that one teacher built their ability to manage stress throughout their participation in the music therapy program. They went on to state, however, that this “was not a primary goal of the program” (p. 6).

These outcomes caused us to consider ways in which outcomes described from music therapist teacher support programs could be aligned to outcomes reported in the professional learning literature. For example, authors have described the ways in which teacher professional learning programs can also result in improved student-teacher relationships (Roorda, Koomen, Jantine, & Oort, 2011) and teacher stress management (Owen, 2016). We also noticed that the sustained outcomes presented above appeared to be more closely related to teachers’ professional growth, than their development of music skills to use in the classroom. We agree with a suggestion made by Woodward (2000) that using music therapeutically requires specialised and professional skills that are outside the realm of being a teacher. It is therefore suggested that music therapists work alongside teachers to set their own professional learning intentions to address through their collaboration with the music therapist.

This proposition is not intended to prohibit music therapists supporting teachers' ability to use music in their classroom. Rather, this recommendation intends to honour the agency of teachers as professionals. Placing emphasis on teacher-driven learning may in turn assist music therapists in ensuring that music therapy interventions are supportive of the needs of teachers, who may then better support the needs of their students.

Next steps.

Several pertinent possibilities for future directions in music therapist teacher support emerged from this critical interpretive synthesis on the literature. It appeared that the initial assessment of student needs often prohibited music therapists from addressing the needs of teachers in a manner that might lead to sustained outcomes from the process. This overall finding echoed the words of Coombes (2011):

Indeed, it became clear as the project progressed that the tension between providing a satisfactory training experience for staff and at the same time ensuring that clients were also catered for was an enormous challenge. In hindsight perhaps more time spent with the trainees helping them devise activities might have stimulated the emergence of a more culturally and contextually specific programme (para. 71).

Critically reviewing these publications has also led us to grasp that an advisable aim for music therapist teacher support is to provide teachers with help to meet their professional obligation of educating children rather than attempting to provide teachers with the skills to use music therapeutically. Therefore, the first recommendation from this critical interpretive synthesis is to focus on the agency of teachers when aiming to build sustained teacher skills through music therapist teacher support programs.

By paying attention to the depiction of teachers in this review, a number of processes that may assist music therapists in engaging in future music therapist teacher support programs were identified. These processes include ensuring that the teachers volunteer for

participation, are respected for the time pressures they are experiencing, and consider teacher-preferred strategies for music making. Furthermore, it is recommended that music therapists consider collaborating with teachers to:

- Shift the initial focus to teachers and conduct a strengths-based and contextual assessment of teachers' professional learning needs
- Support teachers to set their own professional learning intentions and
- Collaborate with teachers to set student learning intentions in line with the appropriate curriculum framework.

Teachers may then be supported to address student learning intentions (through facilitating music related to the appropriate curriculum framework) while addressing their own professional learning intentions.

This review also confirmed what Rickson alluded to as a gap in the training of music therapists to be able to work sensitively when providing support to teachers (2012). It may be helpful for music therapists to further their contextual knowledge about the professional obligations required of the teachers they hope to partner with when engaging in future school programs.

Conclusion.

This paper presents the findings of a critical interpretive synthesis that explored the representation of teachers in literature pertaining to music therapist teacher support programs. Through this process, we noticed that a lack of attention to the needs of teachers appeared to impact on the sustainment of outcomes from such programs. We also perceived a discrepancy between commonly described intentions for teachers' development and descriptions of positive outcomes from music therapist teacher support. Working towards teacher-identified professional learning intentions may assist music therapists in facilitating programs in ways

that support teachers to sustain outcomes after the music therapist ceases working with the teacher. This has the potential to positively impact students in a sustained manner.

Enacting this shift in practice necessitates music therapists developing knowledge about the professional obligations of teachers in their context so that they may support teachers to set student goals in line with educational legislation. The findings of this critical interpretive synthesis suggest exciting potential for music therapists working in schools to support teachers with their professional learning needs, so that they may in turn better support their students. The recommendations that emerged from this critical interpretive synthesis of the literature are not offered to diminish the value of music therapists striving to address the immense needs of students in the current day educational climate. Rather, it is expected that through paying greater attention to the needs of teachers, music therapists will be well placed to support teachers to sustain developments in their own teaching practices for the benefit of both teachers and their students.

Chapter Three: Introduction to the Frame for the Exploration of a Music Therapist Teacher Support Program

Chapter introduction.

This chapter provides a response to the recommendations for future music therapist teacher support programs that emerged from the critical interpretive synthesis presented in the previous chapter. The process of developing an educative frame for a music therapist teacher support program focusing on addressing the professional needs of teachers is described.

The frame for the program explored within this research project emerged through engaging in reflection on the characteristics of best practice teacher support programs in light of my own position and the experience of teachers at the particular school context. Firstly, information about the context of teachers at the particular school in which this research project took place is presented alongside information about my own expertise. Knowledge about the school context presented in the following section was gleaned through observing the dance program. Additionally, information was also gathered through conversations with the school leadership staff members in which I discussed my early intentions for studying a professional learning program. This contextual information is followed by an introduction to the frame of the music therapist teacher support program explored within this research project: Music for Classroom Wellbeing Professional Learning.

School context.

Diverse student needs.

Approximately 400 students from wide-ranging sociocultural backgrounds attended the catholic primary school in which this study took place. As shared by school leadership, the school was historically made up of students of predominantly Italian origin. However, over the past five years, enrolment had shifted to include wider student numbers from Syrian

and Iraqi refugee backgrounds.

Each classroom comprised of approximately 25 pupils with diverse abilities. In keeping with the provision of national legislation pertaining to the rights of students with disabilities (Australian Government, 1992), a growing number of students with a range of learning needs made up each class group. The increasingly diverse student needs of this particular school context was indicative of a wider national trend (H. Cahill, Beadle, Farrelly, Forster, & Smith, 2014).

A classroom teacher worked in the role of Student Wellbeing Officer for two days a week. This role primarily related to liaising between families and classroom teachers about students with particular additional needs. A student psychologist attended the school one day a week and held individual counselling sessions with several students. A teacher was employed two days a week to provide additional support outside of the regular classroom to the students who had recently arrived as refugees. School leadership allocated education support staff members to provide extra assistance in classrooms for part of the school day to assist students with a diagnosis of disability.

The opportunity to observe students in the dance program allowed me to witness teachers working with students who had varying learning and social abilities. While some students seemed to excel during the dance program, other students regularly displayed argumentative or antisocial behaviour that restricted their ability to participate fully in class. I perceived that, like other teachers responding to inclusive education legislation described in the literature (Dally et al., 2019; Graham, 2016), several teachers found it difficult to meet the diverse learning and social needs of the students in their class group. Indeed, some teachers spoke openly to me about the challenges of engaging all learners. The school principal articulated a wish for teachers to receive support with responding to diverse student needs through their participation in the professional learning program.

Addressing the local curriculum framework.

Each year level from prep to grade six was made up of a teaching team of between two and four classroom teaching staff. The Victorian curriculum framework (Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority, 2015) informed the delivery of student learning content. Teaching teams met on a weekly basis to plan lessons in English, mathematics and religious education, guided by the expertise of learning specialist teachers. Teachers used an “inquiry model” to plan integrated learning sequences to address the science and humanities curriculum framework, supported by the deputy principal. In addition to classroom teachers, specialist teachers delivered student education in digital technologies, physical education, music, drama and Italian on a rotating timetable, which is common practice in Australian schools (Ardzejewska, McMaugh, & Coutts, 2010).

The explicit teaching of social and emotional learning skills has been described as a key feature of promoting wellbeing in schools (H. Cahill et al., 2014). The school had recently changed from the delivery of a stand-alone personal and social learning subject towards the integration of Personal and Social Capability Curriculum Guidelines (Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority, 2016) into other subject areas. This curriculum involves students developing their personal resilience, acceptance of diversity, social skills, and ability to recognise and express their emotions. Davies, Cooper, Kettler, and Elliott (2014) report that addressing the growth of student social skills through this curriculum is hoped to contribute towards the belonging and inclusion of students with additional needs. The deputy principal expressed that teachers were generally unsure about how to incorporate the personal and social capabilities into their everyday teaching. She further expressed a wish that teachers receive support with this undertaking through the professional learning program.

Arts culture.

There was a strong existing arts culture at the school. For over ten years students had received a weekly music education program lead by a specialist music teacher. Music education classes focused on the development of musical skills through participating in a wide range of active music making activities. Students could also volunteer to join an open entry choir and strings ensemble held at lunchtime. Classroom teachers were expected to attend specialist music lessons, but often took the opportunity to catch up on administrative tasks. Generalist classroom teachers provided a weekly visual art program with their own class group. Since the beginning of the previous year, all students had also taken part in a weekly drama class provided by a specialist drama teacher.

While leadership staff appeared to encourage teachers to use creative pedagogical methods integrating the arts, I noticed through conversation with teachers there was a general conception that arts provision was the domain of arts specialist teachers. Authors have described the ways in which high stakes tests serve to narrow the curriculum focus, meaning that other curriculum areas (such as arts learning) are often neglected (McLaren & Arnold, 2016). When aiming to promote the capacity of pre-service teachers at using the arts in their classroom, authors have proposed the benefit of building teacher confidence through active music making activities (McLaren & Arnold, 2016).

Every three years the entire student population performed a whole school musical, co-written by the music and drama teachers. The school principal described the musical as an opportunity to celebrate the arts and promote the value of arts learning to the wider school community. It was also suggested by school leadership that the musical was a point of difference for the school and could potentially assist with attracting enrolments. This remark seemed to align with an inclination described in the literature of the appropriation of school music programs to serve an economic agenda (Crooke, 2017).

For the first term, I observed the dance program to be an inclusive opportunity for students to move their bodies. By contrast, in the second term of the program the focus shifted towards using the dance program as an opportunity to teach each year level of students a choreographed dance to perform on stage at the whole school musical. All school staff were required to contribute to some aspect of the production through participating in such activities as supervising student rehearsals, building sets and making costumes. Certain students were selected to perform solo roles.

Teacher attrition and culture of professional learning.

Data from the national My School website showed that the number of teaching staff at the school had reduced from 35 to 30 over the past five years. Indeed, two of the six participating staff members left the school over the course of the dance program.

School leadership staff informed me that the change in the number of teachers employed was largely due to dwindling student enrolments. It appeared that the teachers I observed placed high expectations on themselves to improve student results on high stakes literacy and numeracy tests. The wider educational climate of Australian schools has similarly been impacted by a societal neoliberal agenda (Connell, 2013). In a seminal article, Ball (2003) described the ways in which the marketisation of schools as economic entities have contributed to a dramatic increase in the performative pressures placed on teachers. I assumed that part of the pressure teachers placed on literacy and numeracy learning at this school was related to ensuring they were reemployed. More recently, Mockler (2013) critiqued the domain of Australian teacher professional learning in the current neoliberal age, arguing that “professional learning shaped in the interests of such standards is necessarily defined as narrow and quantifiable in its scope, usually focusing on the acquisition of knowledge and skills that will support teachers to demonstrate their competence in the standards” (p. 38). Instead Mockler argued for professional learning programs that are

tailored to the individual and allow the teacher to drive learning from their natural point of interest. The deputy principal appeared to agree with this perspective and told me that data from the annual staff survey conducted by the Department of Education and Training indicated that some teachers in the school didn't feel that they were provided with enough opportunities for professional learning. The deputy principal explained that there was a perception from teachers that professional learning took place outside of the school grounds and expressed her wish that the exploration of a music therapist teacher support program would help to dispel that misconception.

The emergence of the frame for the exploration of a music therapist teacher support program; Music for Classroom Wellbeing Professional Learning.

Knowledge developed over the early stages of this project led to the emergence of the frame for this exploration into music therapist teacher support. Joining the BuSTA research partnership led me to engage in a personal reflection on my own context as a researcher, and areas of professional expertise. Observing the dance program guided me to critically review the literature pertaining to the wider climate of 21st century teaching. Through this literature review, the need for teacher support programs that assisted teachers to develop their use of inclusive and creative classroom practices and nurture teacher wellbeing was identified. The potential for professional learning as a frame for providing support to teachers was proposed.

Observing the dance program was also the impetus for conducting a critical interpretive synthesis of the literature pertaining to descriptions of music therapist teacher support. This critical interpretive synthesis then led to the emergence of the recommendations for future music therapist teacher support programs to focus on the needs of teachers and hold an educative frame. It was further recommended that future programs align with local educational policies and legislation to maximise the possibility that teachers could sustain practices and benefits from the program without the music therapist present. Although this

study took place in a catholic primary school setting, I decided to align the professional learning program with overarching educational policies that impact on teacher practice in all Victorian primary schools (both catholic and non-denominational).

Reflecting on the bodies of literature pertaining to teacher professional learning and music therapist teacher support programs led to identification of the characteristics of effective teacher support programs. Next, integrating knowledge about the particular school context with understandings about effective teacher support programs and my own position resulted in the emergence of a unique frame for the exploration of a music therapist teacher support program. This frame, Music for Classroom Wellbeing Professional Learning, is outlined below. Within the text of this thesis, this program is also referred to as the Music for Classroom Wellbeing Professional Learning Program, Music for Classroom Wellbeing, the professional learning program or simply the program. Understandings of key concepts “professional learning”, “music” and “classroom wellbeing” are presented along with relevant educational policies.

Understandings of professional learning.

The music therapist teacher support program explored within this research project was framed as professional learning. Within this project, effective practice professional learning was understood to focus on supporting teachers to work towards growth according to personally generated learning intentions aligned with their own teacher identity development and professional obligations. Effective teacher support programs were also understood to be classroom-based and involve membership in a community of practice. Wenger’s (1998) notions of learning as a social and context bound phenomenon informed the development of the model for this professional learning program. Within the professional learning program, teachers were offered support individually and as a group to grow their ability to strengthen the wellbeing of the whole classroom through the use of music.

Link to educational policies.

Australian teachers are obligated to demonstrate their progression related to standards of teaching practice. The Australian standards of teacher practice outline the professional knowledge, practice and engagement expected of registered teachers (AITSL, 2017). As teachers progress through their career, descriptors change to reflect the teacher's developing professional competence. Within the Music for Classroom Wellbeing Professional Learning Program, teachers were encouraged to set personalised learning goals related to the fourth standard (pertaining to teachers' skills at creating learning environments that promote wellbeing and safety of students) and standards 1.5 and 1.6 (related to the ability of teachers to use engaging pedagogical material to meet the learning needs of all students, including those with disabilities).

Understandings of music.

In direct contrast to the school arts culture I had observed, the understandings of music within this professional learning program aligned with a community music therapy perspective in which music can be understood to have a range of affordances, and can therefore be used as a resource (Andsell & DeNora, 2014) in the everyday classroom. I used my professional expertise as a music therapist to leverage the affordances of music in order to support teachers within this professional learning program. Teachers were also supported to develop their ability to leverage the affordances of music in their own classroom context.

Within community music therapy theory, the term "musicking" (Small, 1998) is used to encompass all musical activity from receptive listening to performance based music making. In keeping with the language used by authors describing the enactment of a community music therapy approach to working in schools (Rickson & McFerran, 2014), the

phrase “musical engagement/s” denotes any instance that individuals share in musicking experiences together within this professional learning program.

Link to educational policies.

The curriculum guidelines place learning across art forms as a central requirement for all students of Australian schools (Australian Curriculum Reporting and Assessment Authority, 2016; VCAA, 2016). However, the local curricular guidelines concurrently highlight the agency of individual schools to flexibly organise curriculum delivery through teaching and learning programs in a manner that suits their own context and student cohort (Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority, 2015). Moreover, schools are not required to deliver content from each learning area “as discrete timetabled subjects” (Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority, 2015, p. 18), and may integrate content from within learning areas simultaneously.

I chose not to align the professional learning program with the state “Music” curriculum framework. This decision was intended to emphasise to teachers that the program was not about musical skill acquisition. Rather, the musical engagements with students within this professional learning program were situated within the delivery of the “Personal and Social Capability” Curriculum Guidelines (Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority, 2016).

Understandings of classroom wellbeing.

Within the Music for Classroom Wellbeing Professional Learning Program, the term “wellbeing” was understood to be multifaceted and fluid (Dodge, Daly, Huyton, & Sanders, 2012). The benefits of working towards promoting student wellbeing and resilience in a school context are outlined in a literature review published by the Victorian Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (H. Cahill et al., 2014). The authors propose a preventative model of school wellbeing centring on the development of “protective factors”

(p. 17). These include promoting school connectedness, engagement in learning and positive teacher-student relationships, and are similar to the goals addressed in music-therapy programs in schools informed by community music therapy (Rickson & McFerran, 2014). Within this professional learning program, teachers were supported to promote classroom wellbeing through developing their ability to respond to diverse student needs and create safe and supportive classroom environments.

As outlined previously, awareness of the need to foster teacher wellbeing through professional learning is growing. Supportive and collegiate professional learning has been described as one way of contributing towards fostering teacher wellbeing and flourishing (Owen, 2016). Thus, within this professional learning program, the term “classroom wellbeing” was consciously used in place of the more commonly referred to “student wellbeing” to acknowledge the interrelatedness between the wellbeing of students and teachers in the classroom. Furthermore, use of the term “classroom wellbeing” sought to establish that the professional learning program was about promoting the wellbeing of teachers as well as students.

Strengthening relationships between students and teachers has also been described as a key means of promoting student resilience and wellbeing in the classroom (H. Cahill et al., 2014). Within this professional learning program, classroom based musical engagements informed by community music therapy were used as a means of demonstrating practices that strengthen the relationships between students and teachers.

Within this professional learning program, teachers were invited to explore ways they could promote wellbeing of all members of the classroom in a manner that was personally meaningful to them. The concept “classroom wellbeing” denotes the interrelated wellbeing of students, teachers, and student-teacher relationships that transpires within a classroom setting.

Thus, through their engagement in the professional learning program, teachers were provided with support to promote the wellbeing of their classroom through strengthening:

- The wellbeing of students
- Their own wellbeing as teachers and
- The relationships between themselves and their students.

The concept of “classroom wellbeing” is visually depicted in Figure 1.1. The following section presents an integrated understanding of the features of the Music for Classroom Wellbeing Professional Learning Program.

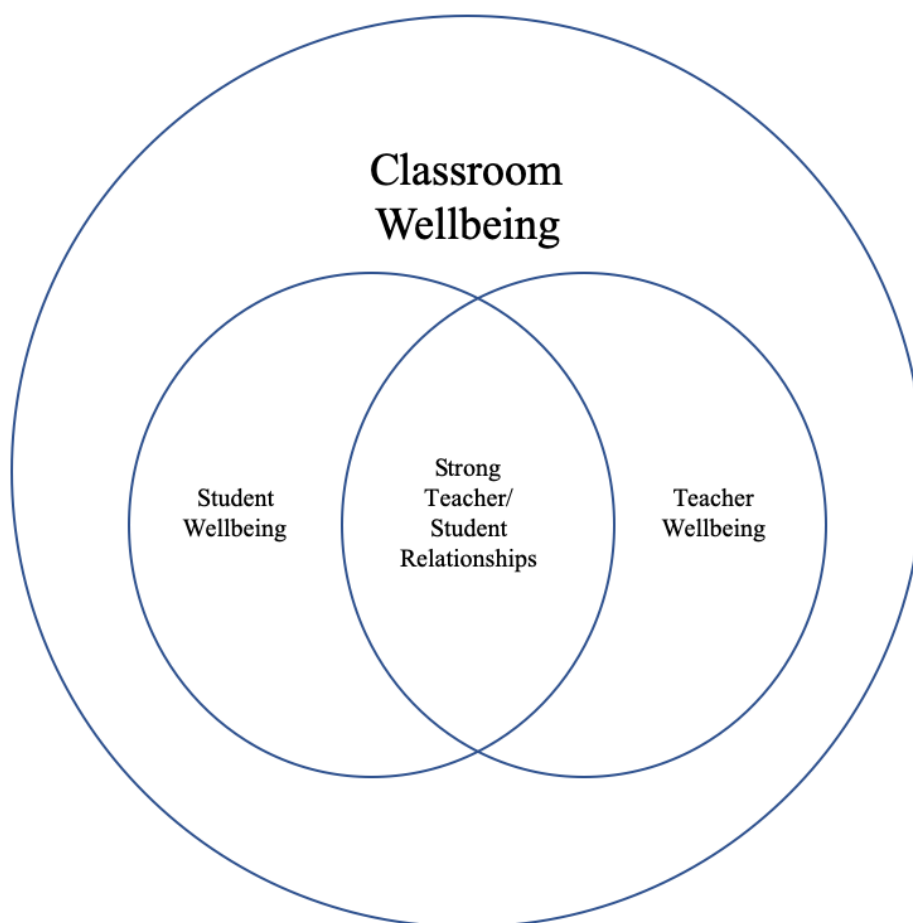


Figure 1.1 Illustration of Classroom Wellbeing.

The concept of classroom wellbeing is understood to be made up of three interrelated components; student wellbeing, teacher wellbeing, and positive relationships between students and teachers.

Link to educational policies.

Approaches towards supporting teachers to promote wellbeing of students within this program also aligned with the local Department of Education and Training student wellbeing policy (Department of Education and Training, 2017). This policy states that teachers must provide opportunities for all students to experience positive wellbeing through their daily learning experience (Department of Education and Training, 2017). School-based factors considered to contribute towards student resilience and wellbeing include the explicit teaching of social emotional learning curriculum (H. Cahill et al., 2014). Student wellbeing also holds a central place in the Victorian (VCAA, 2016) curriculum guidelines through the delivery of the Personal and Social Capability. This aspect of curriculum, designed to be integrated across the school day, emphasises the need for students to develop abilities necessary for positive social relationships with others, recognise and express emotions, enhance personal resilience, and accept diversity.

In order to retain their professional registration, teachers are required to comply with an ethical code of practice. One aspect of this ethical code of practice relates to teachers ensuring that they are physically, mentally and emotionally well enough to perform their professional role (Victorian Institute of Teaching, 2015). Attempts to promote the wellbeing of teachers through the professional learning program aligned with this requirement.

The end of the Part One of the story.

The first three chapters of this thesis have located this research project in the literature and context of a primary school in Melbourne, Australia. The particular approach taken to

study the Music for Classroom Wellbeing Professional Learning Program will be outlined in the following part of the story.

Part Two: Approach to the Study of a Music for Classroom Wellbeing Professional Learning Program

This second part of the story details the approach to the study of the Music for Classroom Wellbeing Professional Learning Program taken within this research project. Table 2.1 lists the chapters that make up this story. A summary of the underpinning philosophical, methodological and theoretical orientations, guiding questions and meaning making processes described is presented in Table 2.4 at the end of this story. The location of the findings within the remainder of this thesis is also noted in Table 2.4.

Table 2.1

Chapters that Encompass Part Two: Approach to the Study of Music for Classroom Wellbeing: A Professional Learning Program

Chapter	Title
Chapter Four	Philosophical, Methodological and Theoretical Orientation of the Study of a Music for Classroom Wellbeing Professional Learning Program
Chapter Five	Ethnographically Informed Research Methods

Chapter Four: Philosophical, Methodological and Theoretical Orientation of the Study of a Music for Classroom Wellbeing Professional Learning Program

Chapter introduction.

This chapter presents the overarching philosophical, methodological and theoretical orientations which informed my approach to exploring the application of a music therapist teacher support program within this qualitative research project. The chapter begins by presenting the critical pragmatist philosophy that overarched all aspects of this research project. I describe how this philosophy relates to the axiological perspective I held as a researcher committed to activism and social justice within the educational sphere. The ontological and epistemological assumptions that underpinned the construction of knowledge are then outlined.

Next the ethnographically informed methodological perspective that guided meaning making processes within this study of the Music for Classroom Wellbeing Professional Learning Program is presented. The fundamental tenets of an ethnographically informed methodological perspective are discussed in light of the overarching critical pragmatist philosophy and the seminal authors that informed research methods of data collection and meaning making introduced.

This chapter concludes with an overview of the foundational theoretical approaches that I drew on when supporting teachers within this study. Three informing concepts from theories of democratic education, critical inclusive education and contextually sensitive teacher professional learning are outlined alongside congruent features of community music therapy theory.

A critical pragmatist philosophy.

A critical pragmatist philosophy overarched my approach to knowledge generation within this research project. Critical pragmatism has been increasingly described in the

literature as a philosophical approach that extends on the critical underpinnings of the work of earlier classical pragmatists (Vannini, 2012, p. 2). To Denzin and Lincoln (2011), a classic pragmatist philosophical perspective is understood to be “a doctrine of meaning, a theory of truth. It rests on the argument that the meaning of an event cannot be given in advance of experience” (p. 246). Within this research project, it was understood that knowledge about the practices of supporting teachers through the Music for Classroom Wellbeing Professional Learning Program could only emerge through the process of facilitating the program.

In addition to asserting the situated nature of knowledge as per a classical pragmatist philosophy, critical pragmatists have emphasised the emancipatory and activist potential of research. To Vannini (2012), critical pragmatists aspire to critique the inequities of the current neoliberal political climate as they occur as part of the everyday culture of organisations and institutions. Kadlec (2006) further asserts that researchers holding a critical pragmatist philosophy seek to develop an understanding of the practices that assist people in an everchanging sociopolitical world. This encompasses conducting research in order to develop knowledge that has “potential for *changing* [original emphasis] the way professionals understand their role and ‘behave in practice’” (Ulrich, 2007, p. 1110). In keeping with this critical pragmatist philosophical stance, within this research project I aimed to develop knowledge to contribute towards changes in both teacher and music therapist practice.

Firstly, within this research project I aimed to critique the wider structural inequities that impacted on teacher practices within a particular school context. I then aimed to support teachers to develop alternative and more equitable classroom practices through processes of professional learning. These aims aligned with a critical pragmatist approach to educational research, in which the researcher seeks to simultaneously contribute towards improving the everyday experience of teachers while providing them with tools to engage in further

reflection and enact change in their classrooms (Feinberg, 2015). Secondly, I aimed to contribute to the knowledge base about the enactment of music therapy practice in schools. This incorporated both the translation of music therapy principles and practices into a framework suited to an educational context, as well as a discussion of the benefits of classroom practices informed by music therapy in the current school climate.

Bourgeois (2010), referred to the critical pragmatist researcher as “scholar-practitioner” (p. 234), approaching their “practice through the lens of criticality, ever conscious of the consequences of actions, actively working within and outside of the organizational framework to affect change” (p.242). The scholar-practitioner engages in conscious processes of reflection on their work and attempts to develop new ways of supporting the wellbeing of others with whom they interact (McClintock, 2004). Being a scholar-practitioner has similarly been described as an implicit aspect of the work of a professional music therapist (Stige & Aarø, 2011, p. 278). The term scholar-practitioner had further relevance within this study through the dual role I upheld while studying the process of facilitating the Music for Classroom Wellbeing Professional Learning Program, further outlined in Chapter Five. I thus positioned myself as “scholar-practitioner” within this PhD study as I attempted to both critique and provide alternatives to the practice of both education and music therapy in schools.

Values informing the study.

Values play a crucial role when conducting research from a critical pragmatist perspective, as a key goal of the researcher is to develop practical knowledge which contributes to social change. This axiological perspective has recognised the potential for research to bridge the divide between critical theoretical understandings and the everyday lived experience of individuals. I decided to recruit teacher participants for the study of a professional learning program within this PhD project as I understood that the changing

professional role of teachers places them under significant pressure and stress. I similarly believed that when given personalised support teachers can act as powerful agents of change and impact on wider society through the work they do in the everyday classroom.

Several values underpinned these beliefs, including my value of the possibility of school as a place where all young people are welcomed and may grow and flourish, and value of teachers as holding the responsibility of educating young people. I further valued the social justice tenets of a critical inclusive approach to education (Liasidou, 2012) and important role teachers can play through the delivery of critical, inclusive and creative classroom pedagogies. However, I also recognised that a range of systemic barriers are present in the current education system that make the delivery of critical, inclusive and creative pedagogies challenging for teachers. I thus also valued teachers' right to support, and opportunities for teachers to connect to themselves and others.

Ulrich (2007) describes the way research undertaken from a critical pragmatist philosophical perspective can hold the potential to transform how individuals understand their professional role, and in doing so also alter their way of being as practitioners. While I tried not to impose a social change agenda on teacher participants, my axiological position did inform the use of critical, inclusive and creative pedagogical practices within the professional learning program. Furthermore, this research project aligned with a critical approach in which provoking teachers to consider the use of new practices within their own context was viewed as desirable (Pangrazio, 2017). Erickson (2011) highlights that researchers driven by their own values often find it challenging to see perspectives other than their own. Moreover, Hastings (2010) discusses the ethical dilemma that may arise within reflexive and emergent research designs when participants may not have consented to "presenting a story that was not originally intended nor sought" (p. 313). Engaging in regular reflexive conversations with research colleagues and my supervisors was therefore an

important means of remaining aware of my axiological position and ensuring that I upheld my ethical obligations as a researcher within this research project.

Ontological assumptions within this research project.

A critical pragmatist philosophy is in keeping with an ontological perspective that views reality as fluid, socially constructed and in perpetual change (Vannini, 2012). I subscribe to the perspective that multiple realities exist and are dependent on an individuals' personal context in the world. To Feinberg (2015), this belief in multiple possible realities can be used by the critical pragmatist as a means of imagining new ways of being and doing. Indeed, a critical pragmatist ontology emphasises the struggle between competing discourses when constructing reality. Subscribing to this view therefore acknowledges the impact of the unequal distribution of power and the proliferation of hegemonic viewpoints. Such an ontological position simultaneously "opens up the space for deconstructive and polemical approaches to the making and remaking of reality as a critical act" (Vannini, 2012, p. 3). Just as the music therapy work within this project sought to provide teachers with creative alternatives to the normative enactment of classroom practices, the overarching philosophy of this research project involved a reimagining of the possibilities for music therapy work in schools. Within this research project, I assumed that a consideration of the particular realities of group teachers in the context of their participation in a professional learning program could offer new potential for the practice of music therapy in schools. This ontological belief on the interaction between context and subjective experience in the creation of reality lends itself to an ecological approach informed by Bronfenbrenner (1992). I thus sought to articulate possibilities for implementing changes to teacher and music therapist practice in schools that considered both personal and cultural factors. To Ulrich (2007), combining the ecological perspective of systems thinking with a critical sensibility is the key task of inquiry underpinned by a critical pragmatist philosophical perspective. This allows the researcher to

envision practical changes for individuals at the personal or micro level with a sensitivity to the wider context.

The construction of knowledge within this research project.

Within this research project, I aligned with a subjectivist epistemology. I therefore understood that knowledge is subjectively constructed in context through personal experience as well as through dialogue and interaction (Lincoln, Lynham, & Guba, 2011). A critical pragmatist epistemological perspective is also informed by critical theory and seeks to construct knowledge that will contribute to the transformation of unjust structures of power (Kadlec, 2006).

This research project was based on the overarching assumption that knowledge of new and creative ways of engaging both students and teachers are greatly needed in the current educational climate. I sought to explore this assumption through a research process that privileged a critical lens to the construction of practical knowledges about the practice of teachers and music therapists in schools. I began this project with the understanding that music therapists hold knowledge about practices that may usefully support teachers. Thus, I aimed to generate practical knowledge in two major domains within this emergent research project. Firstly, I sought to describe how a professional learning program informed by the tenets of community music therapy and inclusive critical pedagogy might be facilitated. Secondly, I aimed to construct understandings of how I might support teachers through such a program. Through holding such an epistemological position within this project, I endeavoured to develop subjective interpretations through paying attention to interactions between myself and a group of teachers in the context of a professional learning program alongside a critical sensitivity to the wider social structures that influenced their experience. I made the assumption that this subjective process of knowledge generation could stimulate dialogue within the music therapy profession about school-based music therapy work. I also

assumed that knowledge produced could in turn contribute towards newly imagined practices focusing on supporting the needs of teachers.

An ethnographically informed methodological perspective.

An ethnographically informed methodological perspective underpinned this PhD research. Traditional ethnographic methodology entails integrating observations about a particular social context with “theoretical interpretation of social organization and culture” (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2019, p. 1). This occurred within this research project through the process of making theoretical interpretations of the social organisation and culture of the program I have framed as Music for Classroom Wellbeing Professional Learning. Within this project I sought to discover new avenues for music therapy practice in school settings that both considered the current climate of education in Australian schools and imagined teachers as holding the central role as change makers within their own classroom setting. In doing so, new possibilities were explored for understanding how a music therapist might work in this contemporary school context to provide support to teachers. Rather than aiming to measure the efficacy of the program, the focus of this study was to explore potential practices for supporting teachers. In keeping with previous music therapy research exploring ways of introducing music therapy within health care settings (Ledger, 2010), an ethnographically informed methodological perspective was used to investigate possible ways in which a music therapist may work.

A key process of ethnographically informed research involves the researcher engaging in fieldwork within a given social site (Erickson, 2011, p. 447). The field of study in which this research project took place included the spaces and activities that made up the professional learning program I facilitated within a particular school setting. Traditionally, ethnographic fieldwork has encompassed the researcher spending a lengthy period of time in a formal process of observation and interaction with the people at the social site. This

extended time period has supported researchers to develop their understanding of the culture and social practices taking place. I spent one day a week over two school terms at the school in two years of this project. Further details of the field of study are provided in Chapter Five.

I upheld an ethnographically informed methodological perspective by recognising that my presence as fieldworker impacted on the field of study. This took place directly, through the process of facilitating the program and interacting with teachers and students, and indirectly through my presence in the field. As participants, teachers were similarly recognised as active agents within the research process. Stige and Ledger (2016) suggest that the colonialist endeavours of early anthropologically oriented ethnographers may serve as a useful reminder for contemporary ethnographers on the importance of reflecting on power and position when engaging in field work. Ledger (2010) further explores the complexities inherent in holding several roles (including scholar and music therapist) during her ethnographic research project in a hospital setting. I sought to engage in ongoing reflexivity about my own privileges as a researcher from a prestigious university throughout this investigation.

Several diverse influences informed the ethnographically informed methodology I employed throughout this research project. These methodological influences include critical ethnography (Carspecken, 1996; Madison, 2012), focused ethnography (Knoblauch, 2005) and meta-ethnography (Noblit & Hare, 1988) approaches to enacting research, introduced below. Further detail of the specific ethnographically informed research methods I used to make meaning in this study are extrapolated in Chapter Five.

Critical ethnography.

When conceptualising my approach to the field of study, I drew from the work of several critical ethnographic researchers. A critical ethnographic researcher viewpoint extends on a traditional ethnographic exploration of culture by beginning with the ethical

agenda of addressing injustice and developing knowledge that will contribute to transformational change. Critical ethnographers seek to identify and highlight aspects of culture that contribute to power imbalances or oppression and aim to collaborate with individuals and communities towards personal growth and social change (Erickson, 2011). When writing about fieldwork, critical ethnographers emphasise their own activist positionality. Within the context of this research project, I brought a critical sensibility to the inquiry based on my practice as a music therapist and teacher informed by critical approaches to work in schools. In doing so I sought to address the imbalances embedded within the current neoliberal education system that placed significant performative pressures on teacher participants and hindered their use of inclusive and creative pedagogical practices. As outlined in Chapter One, I recognised the pressures of the current neoliberal climate (D. Hall & McGinity, 2015) on the experience of teachers in this particular field of study. Thus, I sought to empower teachers to develop their use of critical, inclusive, creative pedagogies and self-care practices so they might become active agents of change within their own classroom. Seeking to develop teachers' practice knowledge through engaging in research methods informed by critical ethnography is in keeping with the critical pragmatist philosophical stance of this project.

The term "performative" is used several times throughout this thesis to denote the Foucauldian notion that identities are constructed and performed in context and influenced by wider discourses and institutional systems (Jeffrey & Troman, 2011). When making meaning within this research project, I further aligned with Madison's (2012) description of the performative nature of critical ethnographic research in which interaction, dialogue and engagement with others in the ethnographic field is understood as performance. From this perspective, the process of dialoguing, interacting and engaging with teacher participants in this study may be seen as a performance that allowed new creations to emerge that otherwise

wouldn't have been possible. Moreover, the performative and dialogical act of making music with teachers within this project could be understood as an additional creative means of developing different ways of knowing within this ethnographically informed inquiry. Music therapy authors Ledger and McCaffrey (2015) further elucidate the potential of a flexible approach to the use of performative art-based research methods when exploring multifaceted music therapy practices. I chose to embrace the notion of performativity when crafting the written accounts of my work with the teachers that make up Chapter Six, Seven and Eight, and the sung reflection presented in Chapter Eleven. Within this thesis I acknowledge that all writing is subjectively constructed. In keeping with a critical ethnographic perspective, I therefore view writing as a performative act, and seek to continually position my standpoint within the text (Madison, 2012, p. 209).

Focused ethnography.

I conducted the study of Music for Classroom Wellbeing Professional Learning in the second year of my candidature. During this time, I aligned with the focused ethnographic approach described by Knoblauch (2005) to explore ways that to support teachers through the professional learning program. Focused ethnography acknowledges that researchers need not spend such an extended time period if the field of study takes place within a social site that the researcher has experience with. A focused ethnographic approach has recently been employed by music therapist researchers exploring the implementation of music therapy services in a paediatric hospital context (Berntsen Due & Ghetti, 2018). My practice expertise working in schools as both a music therapist and teacher well prepared me for the task of engaging in ethnographically informed research within a school setting. Furthermore, drawing on a focused ethnographic approach allowed me to target a particular aspect of the social setting – the professional learning program – as the field of study rather than attempting to develop understandings of the culture of the entire school.

Within a focused ethnographic approach (Knoblauch, 2005), the researcher often captures digital data via video and audio recording equipment to supplement fieldnotes and observations. Supplementing written observations with recorded data was vital within this study as I simultaneously researched and facilitated the professional learning program. The focused ethnographic researcher is then required to engage in deep reflexive thinking in order to sort through the data and make informed decisions about which data is relevant to developing understandings for the inquiry in question. I chose to construct five discrete ethnographic accounts of my work with teachers to illustrate the wide-ranging ways that I provided support to teachers through the professional learning program. These accounts are presented in Chapter Six, Seven and Eight of this thesis.

Meta-ethnography.

After constructing the accounts of my work with teachers in the professional learning program a further cycle of interpretative meaning making was undertaken to create an integrated understanding of the practices that encompassed the process of supporting teachers through professional learning. The process of conducting a meta-ethnography as described by Noblit and Hare (1988) was employed as a guide for synthesising the findings from the five ethnographic accounts. Meta-ethnography has been described as one potential method for making interpretations across multiple accounts or cases within a single field of study. When conducting a meta-ethnography, the researcher attempts to translate the accounts into one another to develop a new synthesised interpretation of the event. In a recent publication, France et al. (2019) suggest that researchers employing a meta-ethnographic project conduct a “lines-of-argument synthesis” after the construction of the initial synthesis in order to develop new theoretical understandings from the process. This entails making further inferences about the translated accounts to develop grounded theories. Conducting this process contributed to the pragmatic aim of creating knowledge about the specific principles

that guided the practice of supporting teachers through professional learning, and development of implications for future music therapy work with teachers. Cahill et al. (2018) suggest that collaborating with others when conducting a meta-ethnographic synthesis is a beneficial part of ensuring the rigour of the process. A pivotal collaborative conversation with my primary supervisor about the unbalanced nature of my initial draft synthesised findings from this meta-ethnography allowed me to see that the process was yet to be completed. As such, in keeping with the critical philosophical stance of this project, the final part of the process of synthesising findings involved examining hidden assumptions about what I had chosen to exclude from the ethnographically informed accounts. This process is consistent with what Noblit and Hare (1988) describe as developing “clinical inference” to expose what was missing from the individual studies or accounts. The completed synthesis thus included knowledge about practices that I had chosen not to engage in as well as ways I had worked with the teachers. The discoveries from this process are expressed in their synthesised form within Chapter Nine.

Theoretical foundations from community music therapy and critical educational approaches.

The critical pragmatist philosophy of this research project overarched the exploration of a program supporting teachers to develop classroom practices that promote wellbeing in their classroom through the use of music. Classroom wellbeing was understood to be a fluid and personalised concept within this exploration. Striving towards classroom wellbeing encompassed the conscious and reflexive use of classroom practices in which all members of the classroom, teachers and students, could grow and flourish. The approach to fostering classroom practices that promote wellbeing within this research project drew on theoretical foundations from the disciplines of music therapy and education. In particular, inspiration was drawn from a consideration of the activist potentiality of theories of:

- community music therapy (Stige et al., 2010)
- democratic education (Dewey, 2011)
- critical inclusive education (Liasidou, 2015)
- critical pedagogy (Freire, 1972)
- and understandings of contextually sensitive teacher professional learning (Mockler, 2013).

Since the turn of the 21st century, community music therapy scholars have increasingly reimagined music as a health resource (Steele, 2016). The task of music therapists involves mobilising the affordances of music when relating with individuals and communities (Pavlicevic & Andsell, 2004, p. 106). The community music therapy informed theoretical perspective within this project draws from the work of several seminal authors who have described approaches to foster the development of healthy communities through the use of music (Andsell, 2014; Andsell & DeNora, 2014; Rickson & McFerran, 2014; Stige & Aarø, 2011; Stige et al., 2010). Thus, within this research project, music was viewed as an everyday feature in the personal and social lives of individuals (DeNora, 2000). Music was further understood as an active agent that may “afford” a range of “para-musical” phenomena (Stige et al., 2010, p. 297).

Further detail about understandings of the community music therapy and critical educational theoretical influences that subsequently informed the approach to supporting teachers is provided below. Within this section, three core understandings from theories of democratic education, critical inclusive education and contextually sensitive teacher professional learning are explicitly outlined alongside congruent understandings from community music therapy theory. Specifying similarities between these theoretical constructs is intended to promote translation and knowledge sharing within the music therapy and education disciplines.

Education is growth for all learners.

The democratic approach of early pragmatist scholar John Dewey is particularly pertinent to this PhD project that explores the nexus between the theoretical tenets of community music therapy and education. To Dewey, education could be viewed as “growth” (2011, p. 31) and encompasses the process of developing holistically. According to Dewey, growth is made possible by both our innate need for others, and ability to learn through experience. Dewey further characterises education as “the enterprise of supplying the conditions which ensure growth” (p.31). Hildreth (2011) argues for the importance of returning to the Deweyan concept of education as growth to counter the emphasis on academic achievement within the current educational climate. From a Deweyan viewpoint, it follows that the use of classroom practices responds to the resources and needs of individual learners within each classroom context. This perspective counters descriptions of the dominant custom of neoliberal classrooms (Hogan, 2016) in which pedagogy is often dictated by testing regimes before a consideration of the learners (Hildreth, 2011). Thus, this research project is further grounded in the theoretical underpinnings of a critical approach to inclusive education, in which students with “all markers of difference” are provided effective education in their local mainstream school (Liasidou, 2015, p. 1). Such a standpoint is in keeping with the legislature published by the United Nations Human Rights Office pertaining to the right of all students to inclusive education (UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, 2016) outlined in Chapter One.

Conceptualising education as growth for all learners aligns with the outlook of several contemporary community music therapy writers. Andsell and Stige (2018) present the possibility of a post-humanist orientation for community music therapy work. From such a position, the music therapist seeks to use reflexive practices in order to engage in active critique of individualistic neoliberal endeavours while supporting the personal strengths and

wellbeing of individuals (Andsell & Stige, 2018). Additionally, music therapists aligning with a community music therapy approach to working in schools have described striving to build flourishing school musical cultures (Rickson & McFerran, 2014), promote engagement (McFerran, Crooke, & Bolger, 2017) and strengthen relationships between teachers and students (McFerran et al., 2015). I aligned with the understanding that education as growth for all learners within this PhD project and proposed that both myself, working as a music therapist, and the teacher participants in this study shared the common intention of promoting growth. Thus, it is argued that the Deweyan notion of “growth” may provide a helpful meeting point for a consideration of the use of practices informed by community music therapy and critical inclusive education theory within this thesis.

Realising critical inclusive education necessitates the use of critical and creative pedagogies.

The critical educational approach within this thesis further draws on theoretical foundations of critical pedagogy (Freire, 1972) to understand how to enact the educational changes required to realise critical inclusive education. In critical pedagogy, the dual process of action and reflection is intended to mobilise disenfranchised individuals and groups to overcome patterns of “systemic dehumanisation” prevalent in the everyday classroom in the current educational climate (Monchinski, 2008, p. 14). In his seminal text “Pedagogy of the Oppressed”, Freire described the commonality of the banking model in education, in which students are seen as passive recipients of information, with the role of teachers to fill students’ minds with knowledge (1972, p. 46). Liasidou (2015) further problematises the enactment of the traditional hegemonic “banking model” method of education in contemporary classrooms and calls for teachers to “place learners at the centre of the educative process and facilitate the process of learning so as to enable all students to flourish and reach the maximum of their potential” (Liasidou, 2015, p. 89). Countering systemic

dehumanisation of students and teachers through critical and dialogic classroom practices that seek to honour the diverse identities of all class members may hold potential for transforming classrooms and schools (Liasidou, 2012). Thus, a critical approach to inclusive education necessitates the use of teaching methods that address student wellbeing needs in order to maximise potential for student growth and flourishing (Liasidou, 2015, p. 76).

Music making has been described within the critical inclusive education discourse as one practical means of enacting inclusive practices in schools (Allan & Cope, 2004). Several authors writing about classroom-based musical practices that seek to transform societal oppression through the use of music making as an everyday radical act (Abrahams, 2006; Akom, 2009; Hess, 2014) have adopted critical pedagogy as a theoretical resource. The practice of community music therapy in schools also aligns with the key tenets of a critical inclusive pedagogical approach through its emphasis on participatory processes, honouring learner resources and strengths, inclusive and collaborative music making, and cycles of action and reflection (Rickson & McFerran, 2014).

Teacher professional learning is contextually bound identity work.

Within this thesis, attempts to support teachers through a professional learning program are located within a discourse that seeks to challenge and actively resist the dominant societal structures that perpetuate the intensification of the teacher workload (D. Hall & McGinity, 2015). The primary analytic focus within this study was the growth of teacher participants. However, as outlined within Chapter One, within this thesis, effective professional learning was understood as supporting teachers to perform strong teacher identities through contextually sensitive processes (Mockler, 2013). The study of the Music for Classroom Wellbeing Professional Learning Program presented in this thesis therefore drew heavily from ecological systems theory, which views each human interaction as taking place within its social context (Bronfenbrenner, 1992).

Ecological systems theory, depicted by a ring of nested concentric circles, sees the individual at the centre of their social world, yet influenced by layers of external influence. These may include close relationships (microsystem), and the interactions between these (mesosystem). The individual also experiences the influence of social structures that they don't have direct contact with (exosystem), and the impact of wider culture (macrosystem).

In keeping with the critical pragmatist philosophical perspective, I sought to use dialogic processes to impact on the “meso” domain that mediates distant contexts and local situations of interaction (Vannini, 2012, p. 4) within the study of Music for Classroom Wellbeing Professional Learning. Within this project, considering the application of ecological systems theory in an educational context allowed a critical investigation of the ways in which wider macrosystem factors directly impact on the experience of individual teachers in the context of their everyday classroom.

An ecological conceptualisation of professional learning aligns with the ecological tenets of community music therapy practice (Stige & Aarø, 2011, p. 153). Awareness of an ecological perspective allows a music therapist to move in and out between the wider macro considerations and more personal micro interactions within their practice to support communities to use music as a health practice (Stige, 2015). Crooke (2015) has advised that developing an understanding of the ways in which music therapy work intersects with social systems and policy can help music therapists to maximise the impact of their work in schools. Stige (2002) further discusses the ways in which holding an ecological lens allows the contextually sensitive music therapist to consider different “ports of entry” (p.170) for engaging in music therapy practice. Within this study, focusing directly on teachers allowed a novel port of entry for music therapy work in schools.

Chapter Five: Ethnographically Informed Research Methods

Chapter introduction.

This PhD project aimed to explore new possibilities for the practice of music therapy in schools with a particular emphasis on attending to the needs of teachers. The overarching question that emerged to guide this study was “How can teachers be supported through a Music for Classroom Wellbeing Professional Learning Program?” Answering this question entailed explicating responses to several guiding sub-questions:

- What practices constituted the program?
- What teacher support needs were addressed during the program?
- How did teachers describe being supported?
- What principles guided the practice of supporting teachers through the program?

This chapter provides an overview to the ethnographically informed research methods used to respond to these questions within the study of the Music for Classroom Wellbeing Professional Learning Program.

Within the following chapter, recruitment processes are described and the field of study outlined. The people who made up the professional learning program are introduced and practices that made up the Music for Classroom Wellbeing Professional Learning Program presented. This chapter concludes with a discussion of the interpretive processes used to make meaning within the study of the Music for Classroom Wellbeing Professional Learning Program.

Recruitment.

Ethical approval for this research project was granted by the University of Melbourne humanities and applied sciences human ethics sub-committee (Project 1545449.4) and Catholic Education Melbourne Analysis, Policy & Research Team (Project 0616) prior to

initial contact at the school (See Appendix A for ethics approval letters). Two members of the school leadership staff consented to join the study at a meeting after ethical clearance had been gained. The following week, teachers were invited to join the study of a Music for Classroom Wellbeing Professional Learning Program during a presentation I gave at their after-school staff meeting.

The program was described as an opportunity to engage in professional learning at promoting classroom wellbeing, using music. Teachers were explicitly informed that they would be assisted to use music to promote the wellbeing of both their students and themselves. Teachers were further informed that they would be offered personalised support related to:

- developing their ability to create safe and inclusive classroom environments as per the national standards of teaching practice (AITSL, 2017)
- addressing the Personal and Social Capability Curriculum Guidelines (Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority, 2016) through the use of music.

At the end of the presentation interested teachers were asked to approach me personally or via email with any questions or to express their interest in taking part in the study. Three staff members expressed interest immediately after the presentation, with another three teachers approaching me in the staff room the following day. All interested teachers were provided a plain language statement (see Appendix B) and consent form (see Appendix C) and it was explained what their participation in the professional learning program would entail as well as how research data would be collected, managed and disseminated. At this point, teachers were informed that the researcher would ask questions, take notes and sometimes audio / video record sessions pertaining to planning and implementation of the professional learning program. Teachers were ensured that they were

free to cease involvement in the research project at any stage while still taking part in the professional learning program. Teachers were also informed that their participation in the research study would not disadvantage them professionally.

All students at the school were provided information about the research project through the school newsletter. Students in the class groups of teachers taking part in the professional learning program were sent home an information pack including an introductory letter. Families were advised of the possibility of their children being audio/video recorded and provided with contact details of the research team should families wish to discuss this project further.

The field of study.

As outlined in Chapter Four, this study was informed by the focused ethnographic methodological perspective presented by Knoblauch (2005) in which the exploration of culture is confined to a designated field of study within a larger social setting. For the purposes of this research project, the field of study was restricted to the practices encompassing the Music for Classroom Wellbeing Professional Learning Program conducted at a Catholic primary school in a traditionally working-class suburb of Melbourne.

The people that occupied the field of study included myself as scholar/practitioner, teacher participants, the students in their classrooms and leadership staff member participants. Activities that made up the Music for Classroom Wellbeing Professional Learning Program are outlined below. Figure 2.1 illustrates the field of study for this research project.

People.

My own position as scholar-practitioner.

Within the study of the professional learning program I embodied the role of scholar-practitioner. This meant that I was simultaneously acting as music therapist and researcher

during the professional learning program. Like fellow ethnographically informed music therapist researcher Ledger (2010), I found it challenging to navigate the disparities between my responsibilities as researcher and ways I may have acted as music therapist practitioner. A further level of complexity within this process related to the nature of my practice expertise as both trained music therapist and classroom teacher. In a discussion about the researcher position in qualitative research, Berger (2015) explains a need for ongoing reflexive practices when the researcher shares experiences with participants, as well as the potential for shared experiences to support the recruitment of participants. Within this study I noticed my tendency to highlight my practice expertise as teacher and teacher trainer within the professional learning program. I also noticed a propensity to assume that teachers were experiencing the varying pressures of their professional role as stressful, as I had during my own teaching career. I ensured that I regularly took part in conversations about the intricacies of navigating these role challenges within meetings with my research supervisors. I also sought to understand the ways that my status as a teacher appeared to influence teachers' buy-in when interpreting the data collected within this study.

Teacher participants.

Six classroom teacher participants consented to participate in the study. All participants were given a pseudonym for the dissemination of findings from this research project. Table 2.2 introduces the six classroom teacher participants of the study of Music for Classroom Wellbeing Professional Learning. Specific details about the needs of students in each of the teachers' class group are deliberately absent from this table to emphasise the teacher-focused nature of this professional learning program. Furthermore, in keeping with recent music therapy scholarship seeking for consistency between strengths-based approaches to practice and the representation of people in research dissemination (Fairchild & Bibb, 2016), participants are introduced alongside their self-described strengths as a teacher. The

teaching experience of each participant is presented along with the class and age of their students. Italics is used within this table to denote the teachers' own words.

Throughout this thesis I seek to elucidate the differences between research practices and practices that encompassed the music therapist led professional learning program. In doing so I chose to use the term “engagement” when referring to staff member or students taking part in the professional learning program, and “participation” when referring to staff member participants taking part in research processes.

Table 2.2

Teacher Participants of the Study of Music for Classroom Wellbeing Professional Learning Program

Teacher	Self-Described Strengths as a Teacher	Teaching Experience	Class Group
Kafka	<i>I want to do my best to help them be what they can be. I have a big passion for music and art.</i>	First year of teaching, trained music and drama as well as general classroom teacher.	Grade two (7-8 years old).
Liz	<i>Taking into consideration the kids emotional wellbeing. I feel like that is something that I keep in the back of my mind all the time.</i>	Third year of classroom teaching, first year of teaching prep.	Prep (5-6 years old).
Jen	<i>I'm very organised.... I like to have a plan. And then stick to the plan, classroom management.</i>	Sixth year of classroom teaching, second year of teaching grade four.	Grade four (9-10 years old).
Kate	<i>Enthusiasm. I like developing rapport with kids and making them feel comfortable so that they can be at their best for learning and feel safe.</i>	15 years teaching (including classroom, environment and physical education roles), seventh year at this school.	Prep (5-6 years old).
Justine	<i>I have a good relationship with the kids... pretty easy going with them... I don't yell.</i>	15 years as library teacher and five years as classroom teacher. 11 th year at this school.	Grade five (10-11 years old).
Amelia	<i>Connectedness. I can connect with probably every child in my class on some level and I make sure that I do connect with them.</i>	32 years teaching experience in varied school settings, six years teaching at this school.	Grade two (7-8 years old).

Leadership staff participants.

Two members of the school leadership team; the principal and deputy principal; consented to participate in the study and gave consent for their names to be used throughout research dissemination. In particular, leadership staff participants provided contextual information that informed the frame for Music for Classroom Wellbeing Professional Learning, and pragmatic support related to timetabling and room allocation within the program itself. No further information about leadership staff member participants is provided here to once again emphasise the teacher-focused nature of this study.

Students.

Although the students within each teachers' classroom took part in the weekly musical engagements that took place during Music for Classroom Wellbeing Professional Learning Program, they were not research participants of this study. However, as students coexisted with teachers within the field of study, anonymous reference to students is occasionally made within the Chapter Six, Seven and Eight teacher accounts of this thesis.

The enactment of the Music for Classroom Wellbeing Professional Learning Program.

The Music for Classroom Wellbeing Professional Learning Program took place over a period of one day a week across two school terms for a total of 16 weeks. The emergent, contextually bound and personally tailored nature of the professional learning program means that it was not possible to describe the program in such a manner that it may be replicated exactly. However, a description of the practices that made up the professional learning program is presented below. The specific terms used to categorise practices used within the program (assessment and planning, implementation and professional learning community) were chosen to align with language of the Australian standards of teacher practice (AITSL, 2017). Further specific detail of the activities that made up the Music for Classroom

Wellbeing Professional Learning Program can be found in the Chapter Six, Seven and Eight ethnographic accounts.

Assessment and planning.

The first weeks of the program were characterised by getting to know each participating teacher in their classroom context and gathering information about their resources and wellbeing support needs. Holistic assessment activities included:

- Undertaking a formal observation of teachers in their classroom context (please see Appendix D for the observation template)
- Holding an individual assessment conversation with teachers (see Appendix E for the template that guided these conversations)
- Providing examples of musical engagements with teachers and students (aligning with Rickson and McFerran (2014, p. 43) in their model of community music therapy informed school practice.)

I then met with each teacher individually in the final two weeks of term two to create a plan for co-facilitation of musical engagements in their classroom. At this point, teachers were encouraged to set:

- A personal learning intention for their own professional learning in line with the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers (AITSL, 2017)
- Student learning intention/s according to the Personal and Social Capability Curriculum Guidelines (Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority, 2016)
- A personal intention for improving their ability to engage students in music
- A student intention for classroom musical engagements.

In keeping with this intention, all teachers made general suggestions for teacher and student learning intentions in line with legislative frameworks. Teacher professional learning

intentions were identified from the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers (AITSL, 2017). Student learning intentions were identified from the Personal and Social Capability Curriculum Guidelines for Students (Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority, 2016). However, the extent to which the teachers developed specific learning intentions and incorporated these into their own assessment practices depended on each individual teacher. For example, only Jen and Justine aligned classroom musical engagements with specific descriptors in the Personal and Social Capability Curriculum Guidelines. Additionally, Jen set specific professional learning program goals in line with the Australian Standards of Teacher Practice. A summary of the resources, needs, learning intentions and plan for musical engagement gained through this collaborative assessment and planning process is found in Table 2.3. Within Table 2.3, teachers are presented in order from least to most experienced. Italics is used within these tables to denote the teachers' own words.

For those teachers who did not choose to formally specify learning intentions aligned with professional learning and curriculum frameworks, the learning intentions listed in Table 2.3 were specified by me. Furthermore, the learning intentions listed for Amelia are ~~crossed out~~ to illustrate the ways in which collaboration with Amelia prioritised her own wellness in the classroom rather than addressing learning goals.

Table 2.3

Information Identified Through Assessment and Collaborative Planning with Teachers

Areas of Assessment and Planning	Kafka	Liz
Resources		
Self-Described Teacher Strengths	<i>I want to do my best to help them be what they can be.</i>	<i>Taking into consideration the kids emotional wellbeing. I feel like that is something that I keep in the back of my mind all the time.</i>
Musical Background	Learned piano as a kid, played in bands since high school, sang in school choir, obsessed with playing different music, music trained primary teacher.	Learned singing in high school, loves listening to Italian music.
Existing Use of Music in Classroom	Plays live music on guitar and sings with students, music learning activities integrated throughout the day.	Plays songs on YouTube while students are eating lunch.
Wellbeing Needs Teacher	<i>There's lots of different pressures you want to listen to every child's problems as well but sometimes you can't.</i>	<i>If they're happy, I'm happy.</i>
Students	<i>There's no real massive issues, it's just the same things happening over and over – friendship dramas, a few social issues.</i>	A few children who are anxious.

Areas of Assessment and Planning	Kafka	Liz
Learning Intentions		
Teacher Professional Learning	<u>Graduate Teacher 4.2</u> Demonstrate the capacity to organise classroom activities and provide clear directions.	<u>Graduate Teacher 1.5</u> Differentiate teaching to meet the specific learning needs of students across the full range of abilities.
Student Curriculum Learning	<u>Level 1 & 2:</u> Listen to others' ideas and recognise that others may see things differently.	<u>Foundation:</u> Recognise that problems or challenges are a normal part of life and that there are actions that can be undertaken to manage problems.
Musical Engagement Teacher	Compose songs for use in the classroom to provide structure / promote acceptance, learn how to use music in teaching rather than teach music.	Overcome shyness and sing in the classroom, begin to learn guitar.
Student	Follow instructions in teacher chants Sing "Same and Different" song.	Sing songs about how to manage problems that they experience.

Areas of Assessment and Planning	Jen	Kate
Resources		
Self-Described Teacher Strengths	<i>Organisation, having a plan, classroom management, assessment.</i>	<i>Enthusiasm. I like developing rapport with kids and making them feel comfortable so that they can be at their best for learning and feel safe.</i>
Musical Background	Taught herself the violin on YouTube in the past few years, likes to sing (helped out with the school choir previously), likes to listen to the radio.	Some basic keyboard training, loves listening to folk music.
Existing Use of Music in Classroom	No music in the classroom currently.	Uses chants to provide instructions to her students, sings songs to accompany a phonics program.
Wellbeing Needs		
Teacher	Lots of challenges regarding time pressures and workload.	<i>Feeling tired but good.</i>
Students	Two students in particular who have difficulties with social skills, also a need for the rest of the grade to accept them.	Many students for whom English is a second language, neglect for some students at home, one student behaviour is impacting others, one student being deported.

Areas of Assessment and Planning	Jen	Kate
Learning Intentions		
Teacher Professional Learning	<u>Proficient Teacher 4.1</u> Establish and implement inclusive and positive interactions to engage and support all students in classroom activities.	<u>Proficient Teacher 3.6</u> Evaluate personal teaching and learning programs using evidence, including feedback from students and student assessment data, to inform planning.
Student Curriculum Learning	<u>Level 3 and 4</u> Demonstrate skills for effective participation in group tasks and use criteria provided to reflect on the effectiveness of the teams in which they participate.	<u>Foundation:</u> Develop a vocabulary and practise the expression of emotions to describe how they feel in different familiar situations.
Musical Engagement Teacher	Use music in the classroom, percussion instruments with students.	Use the keyboard in her classroom.
Student	Group instrumental improvisation, students observe and comment on characteristics that worked / didn't work.	Sing songs to label emotions as part of literacy program.

Areas of Assessment and Planning	Justine	Amelia
Resources		
Self-Described Teacher Strengths	<i>Have a good relationship with the kids, don't yell.</i>	<i>Connectedness. I can connect with probably every child in my class on some level and I make sure that I do connect with them.</i>
Musical Background	Played clarinet in high school band, likes 80s and 90s music.	Learned piano and guitar as a child, musical family, used to sing with sisters but no current personal musical use.
Existing Use of Music in Classroom	Students write down a song that makes them feel happy, each day after recess. Justine chooses one at random and plays on YouTube, students dance and sing along.	Uses recorded music during prayer time to “ <i>set the tone of the day</i> ”.
Wellbeing Needs		
Teacher	<i>You're opening a can of worms! Being with the kids helps you forget your own issues.</i>	<i>Over the last few years I've had to focus more on my own wellbeing just because the job is so demanding.</i>
Students	One child <i>stuff going on at home</i> , issues in the yard with managing emotions.	One student with suspected Autism Spectrum Disorder, anxiety for a few students.

Areas of Assessment and Planning	Justine	Amelia
Learning Intentions		
Teacher Professional Learning	<u>Highly Accomplished Teacher 4.1</u> Model effective practice and support colleagues to implement inclusive strategies that engage and support all students.	<u>Highly Accomplished Teacher 4.1</u> Model effective practice and support colleagues to implement inclusive strategies that engage and support all students.
Student Curriculum Learning	<u>Level 5 and 6</u> Explore the links between their emotions and their behaviour.	<u>Level 1 & 2:</u> Use basic skills required for participation in group tasks and respond to simple questions about their contribution to group tasks.
Musical Engagement		
Teacher	Share the ‘happy song’ process with colleagues at staff meeting / assembly.	Support the wider school community to consider using Music for Classroom Wellbeing, reclaim her personal relationship with music.
Student	Create personal Music for Classroom Wellbeing playlist, write song about emotions in small group.	Form a class band and perform a song at assembly.

Note. Italics denote the teachers’ own words. Teacher professional learning intentions are taken from the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers (AITSL, 2017). Student curriculum learning intentions are taken from the Victorian Personal and Social Capability Curriculum Guidelines (Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority, 2016).

Implementation.

The remaining ten weeks of the program took place after the school holidays in term three. This stage included weekly co-facilitated musical engagements with each teacher and students in their classroom as well as ongoing informal and planning-focused conversations with individual teachers and the deputy principal. During this time, I sent weekly emails to teachers individually and as a group, and shared planning documentation and musical material with teachers via an online file sharing platform. I met individually with teachers for further planning and/or personal musical engagement sessions as required.

Over the course of the program I also facilitated fortnightly professional learning community meetings with teacher participants, either before or after school. Each professional learning community meeting included the opportunity to chat informally over a hot drink and snacks, formally share experiences of classroom musical engagements, and take part in music making. On one occasion, the teachers and I presented as a professional learning community to the whole teaching staff at an after-school meeting. At the end of the program the teachers and I celebrated the success of the program over dinner at a local restaurant. Attempts were made throughout the implementation process to support the promotion of sustained outcomes from the professional learning program.

Pangrazio (2017) has described the use of provocation as a critical research method, in which the researcher seeks to prompt the development of new ways of thinking and acting within their socio-political context. Within this professional learning program, collaborating with teacher participants sometimes included the use of provoking them to reflect on topics that they may not have otherwise considered.

Other.

Critical educational ethnographer Carspecken (1996) suggests the importance of the researcher exploring participant behaviour across social sites in an attempt to identify how “routine activities discovered on one site influence those on another” (p. 198). In addition to exploring formal Music for Classroom Wellbeing Professional Learning Program activities as described above, I observed teacher practice across the school site. This included such activities as attending staff meetings and assemblies, hanging out with teachers in their everyday classroom and spending time in the staff room.

Illustrative depiction of the field of study.

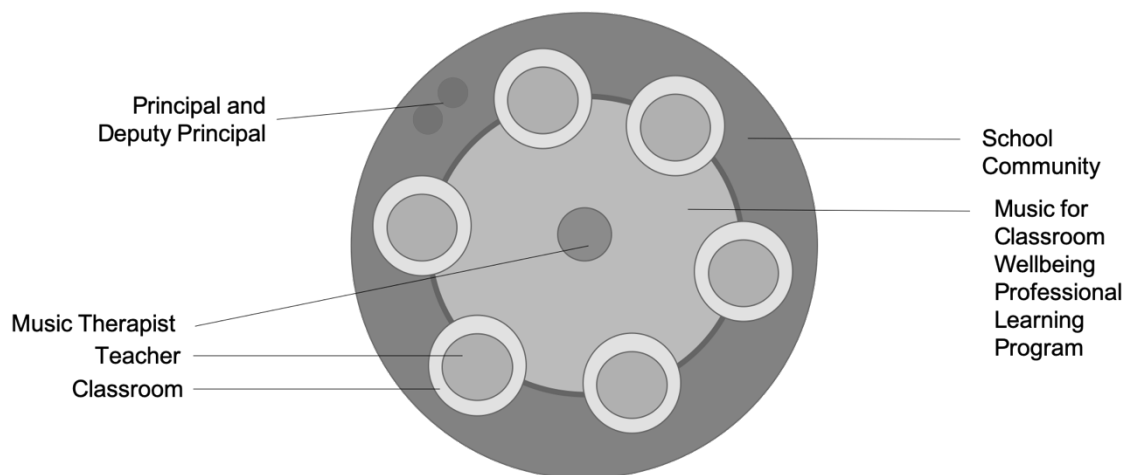


Figure 2.1 Illustrative depiction of the field of study.

The centrally located circle represents the music therapist responsible for facilitating the professional learning program. Each of the six participating teachers is depicted by another small circle and located inside their own classroom; the space they occupy with their students. The six teachers are joined by a line representing their connection through the professional learning community. The large circular space between each teacher and the music therapist is representative of the Music for Classroom Wellbeing Professional Learning Program itself. Two members of the school leadership team, the principal and the deputy

principal are represented by two smaller circles and situated in the school community, just outside of the Music for Classroom Wellbeing Professional Learning Program. While they are not directly part of the professional learning community itself, their presence within this depiction of the field of study is intended to highlight their ongoing support of the study of Music for Classroom Wellbeing Professional Learning.

Making meaning processes.

When constructing knowledge within this emergent project, I rejected the notion that data exists “independent of the interpretive desires of the data “collector”(St. Pierre & Jackson, 2014). Rather, it was understood within this research project that “analysis occurs *everywhere and all the time*” (p. 717, original emphasis). I thus aligned the meaning making processes within this study with a research approach that challenges the notion of discrete data collection and meaning making stages.

Researchers employing such an outlook on meaning making “do not follow a particular analytic method; rather, they borrow concepts, invent approaches, and create new assemblages that demonstrate a range of analytic practices” (St. Pierre & Jackson, 2014, p. 717). Within this study, a range of approaches were borrowed from authors in the ethnographic methodological tradition to explore possible ways that a music therapist might work (Stige & Ledger, 2016). The following section outlines the assemblage of processes I engaged with when responding to the overarching guiding question “How can teachers be supported through a Music for Classroom Wellbeing Professional Learning Program?”

Collecting data as coperformer.

Within this thesis, the phrase “collecting data” is understood to mean the act of gathering data created through the Music for Classroom Wellbeing Professional Learning Program. Madison (2012) uses the word “coperformer” (p.24) to denote the role embodied by the researcher who chooses to actively dialogue and create with participants within critical

ethnographic research projects. I chose to collect a large and varied range of data from my position of cop performer while studying and facilitating the professional learning program. The process of collecting data included compiling a field journal, gathering artefacts and conducting ethnographically informed interviews. All of these data forms were collected in response to the emergent exploration of how I could support teachers through Music for Classroom Wellbeing Professional Learning.

Compiling a field journal.

Throughout the Music for Classroom Wellbeing Professional Learning Program I compiled a field journal. In his seminal essay on the interpretation of culture, Geertz (1973) referred to ethnography as “thick description” (p.10) in which the researcher compiles an extensive document of what they observe in the field of study. Within this study, the field journal was constructed by noting information about the context as well as the behaviour and interactions between myself, staff and students. Many verbal interactions were documented verbatim.

Critical educational ethnographer Carspecken (1996, p. 47) encourages researchers to make minimal inferences or speculations about the meaning of events within a field journal. However, by contrast, I chose to engage in reflexivity to name the interpretations I was making within my field journal in this study. Finlay (2002) describes the necessity of reflexive inquiry in acknowledging the impact of researcher position in the ways in which knowledge is shaped through research. When describing her own research, Finlay shares that

I needed to work to unravel instances in which my participants and I shared understandings and ones in which we diverged. I had to guard against assuming that we shared the same language and saw the job in the same way... (p. 537).

I too attempted to remain conscious of my lived experience as a teacher when forming interpretations about the practices used when compiling my field journal.

Over the planning phase of the program I had the opportunity to sit in the staff room at regular intervals across the school day and write notes about all aspects of setting up the professional learning program. The field journal compiled during this planning phase thus tended to focus on noting the logistical processes of organising classroom sessions for the professional learning program (See Appendix F for an example). Interactions with the members of the school leadership team and teacher participants of the program were also documented. The field journal additionally included notes related to my embodied thoughts and feelings in relation to the actions I was taking. These thoughts and feelings were included as a means of embedding a reflexive standpoint into the fieldnotes and mediating some of the challenges experienced by the critical scholar-practitioner described in the literature (Hiller & Vears, 2016). On one occasion at the beginning of the program, I observed each teacher in the context of their classroom practice to inform the development of examples of musical engagements to share with teachers and students the following week. For these classroom observations, a template was used to capture observations (see Appendix D). An example of the notes compiled in my field journal during the second week of planning within the professional learning program is found in Appendix F.

By contrast, during the following term most of the school day was spent facilitating sessions in the classroom, conversing with staff members, and leading meetings for the professional learning community. I did not have the time during this stage to compile a field journal while I was at the school. Instead, a template was used to jot down handwritten notes relating to my feelings and thoughts about the program in between sessions (see Appendix G for an example). The voice memo function on my phone was also occasionally used to record short verbal notes of my thoughts in between sessions.

*Gathering artifacts*⁵.

A range of artifacts were gathered over the course of the professional learning program. In keeping with the focused ethnographic approach discussed in Chapter Four (Knoblauch, 2005), I chose to collect audio recordings of the majority of classroom-based sessions with teachers and their students. As I was unable to compile my field journal while facilitating sessions this method was employed as a pragmatic means of supplementing my memory of the events that had transpired. A digital personal recorder was placed at the front of the classroom to attempt to capture recordings of the voice of myself and the classroom teacher. Direct transcripts were made of two audio recorded conversations with each of the teacher participants. These included transcripts of the assessment conversations held with each teacher during the planning phase of the professional learning program, and transcripts of each teachers' presentation at the whole school staff meeting.

Video recordings of many of the classroom-based sessions and professional learning community meetings were also collected. On most occasions a moveable clamp attached the video recorder to the whiteboard stand at the front of each classroom. As with the audio recorder, the video recorder was pointed towards the front of the classroom, so any video captured was predominantly of myself and the teacher rather than the students. Collecting these recordings meant that I could focus on program facilitation when I was with the teachers and refer to the recordings after the event when making interpretations of what had transpired. Throughout the study, still photos were regularly taken of various scenes that appeared to be meaningful, including the teachers in their context, and handwritten text to capture a visual image of a moment in time.

⁵ 'Artifact' and 'artefact' are two commonly used spellings of the same word to describe anything created by humans that gives cultural information about those who created or used it. I chose to align with the spelling used by critical ethnographic researcher Madison (2012) within this thesis.

All planning documents collected during the professional learning program were also retained as artifacts. These included email correspondence between myself and the participating teachers, classroom unit planners and PowerPoint presentations. Soft copies of these artifacts were saved in folders on my computer hard drive as well as in a dedicated email folder. Examples of planning documentation co-created with each teacher can be found in Appendix H. When viewed in light of the overarching critical pragmatist philosophical underpinnings of this research project that seeks to promote new practice knowledge, the collection of planning documentation was critical.

Finally, musical materials were also collected as a form of cultural artifact within this study. In addition to the audio and video recording of the performance of musical engagements within the professional learning program sessions, artifacts also comprised of song lyrics and chordal accompaniments that had been played, adapted or written over the course of the program. Ledger and McCaffrey (2015) propose that arts created within a music therapy research project may be used as a means of deepening knowledge. Within this project the musical materials used created during the professional learning program were gathered in order to contribute to the development of understandings about the kind of musical engagements that may support teachers. A recording of the songs personally created by myself and mentioned in text can also be found in Appendix H.

Ongoing meaning making.

Ongoing reflection transpired throughout the entire study of Music for Classroom Wellbeing Professional Learning Program as I endeavoured to best support the teacher participants. Each week the day after I had been at the school, I compiled a large spreadsheet description of the previous days' events. This served to assist me in making sense of the large quantity of data that I had collected, as well as make plans for the following week. I used headings such as "what did the teacher do?", "what did I do?" and "how did I feel?" to

organise my recollections. Relevant photo artifacts were added into the spreadsheet and corresponding audio and video files listed. Constructing this summary spreadsheet served as a means of reflecting on the process of supporting teachers, and informed planning for the following week. An example of this summary spreadsheet document is found in Figure 2.2.

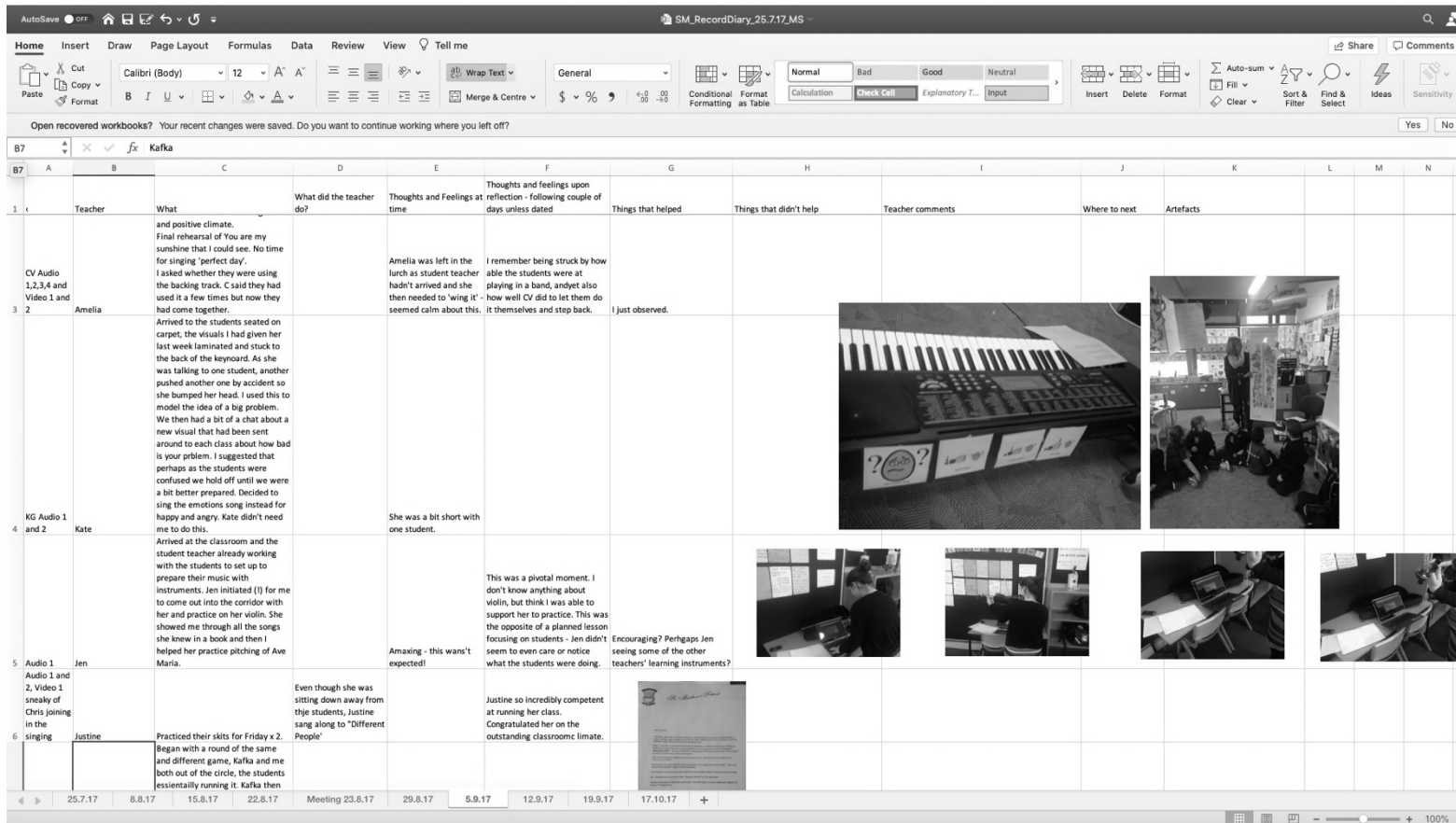


Figure 2.2 Example of spreadsheet summary document.

This figure depicts an example of a screen shot of the summary spreadsheet document. Each row contains sequential information about the events that transpired across the day. Each column contains further detail about each event. Corresponding photo artifacts are inserted into the summary spreadsheet document.

Conducting ethnographically informed interviews.

Semi-structured individual interviews were conducted with each of the participating teachers and leadership staff members on two occasions after the conclusion of the professional learning program. On both occasions, the deputy principal organised a replacement teacher to work in each classroom for 40 minutes so that teachers could spend time being interviewed. I subscribed to the perspective conveyed by Madison (2012) that memories and experiences are constructed through a dialogic partnership within an ethnographically informed interview (p. 28). In both instances, the rare opportunity to engage in uninterrupted dialogue with each teacher was used to augment my own memories and experiences of the professional learning program. I was reminded by the advice given to me by music therapy researcher Stige (2017) that the ethnographically informed researcher seeks to observe how people act in context rather than relying on data collected from interviewing people about their thoughts. I thus aimed to use the opportunity to interview teachers as a means of testing the inferences that I had made through my observations about how teachers had been supported through the Music for Classroom Wellbeing Professional Learning Program. In doing so I aligned with contemporary meaning making research processes, rejecting the notion that “words spoken by participants are privileged regardless of their adequacy to respond to the study’s substantive and theoretical demands” (St. Pierre, 2011, p. 716).

Interviews were held in a confidential space adjacent to the staff room. A series of open-ended questions were asked of participants in audio-recorded conversations, and participants were offered the opportunity to freely comment at the end. Each interview was audio recorded and transcribed verbatim.

An “end interview” was conducted directly after the final classroom session of the professional learning program. As this follow up interview was not considered as part of the original scope of research, participants were once again provided with a plain language statement (see Appendix B) and asked to sign a consent form (see Appendix C) to participate. Participants were assured that their decision regarding whether to participate would not impact upon their position at the school. Eight staff members provided their consent to participate in this follow up interview, with two of the teachers (Amelia and Justine), with the remaining four teachers and two leadership staff interviews taking place the following term.

This interview focused on the development of insights about teacher’s and leadership staff members’ experience of the professional learning program and gaining their point of view regarding practices that had been sustained from the professional learning program. Please refer to Appendix I for a list of the questions that guided the end interviews.

A “follow up interview” was conducted six months after the completion of the Music for Classroom Wellbeing Professional Learning Program, part way into the new school year. Within this interview teachers were asked about what had been happening since the program had finished and to describe whether they were still using music in any way (personally or with their new class group). School leadership staff members were also interviewed about their perspective about the sustained practices and benefits that they had noticed since the program had ceased. Justine was absent on this day, so was emailed the list of interview questions. Justine responded by sending through short written answers to each question. I acknowledged that I didn’t have the opportunity to dialogue with Justine about her responses

to the interview questions when making interpretations based on these responses. Please refer to Appendix J for a list of the questions that guided the follow up interviews.

Crafting ethnographic accounts.

Once the professional learning program had ended, the highly inductive process of crafting ethnographic accounts was used to provide an initial response to the first three sub-questions: “What practices constituted Music for Classroom Wellbeing Professional Learning?”, “What teacher support needs were addressed during the program?” and “How did teachers describe being supported?”

As previously mentioned, writing was understood to be a contextually bound performative act within this research project. I aligned with the perspective of Guillion (2016) who describes the process of writing ethnography as “creative non-fiction” (p.11). Thus, within this thesis, crafting ethnographic accounts was understood to be a simultaneously creative and systematic process of telling stories about my subjective interpretation of the events that transpired in the professional learning program. Engaging in conscious reflexive thought about my dual role as scholar-practitioner was crucial throughout the writing process. This allowed me to differentiate between practice-oriented decisions that I had made during program facilitation, and interpretive decisions when making inferences as researcher while writing the accounts.

The work of various music therapy scholars who have embraced the notion of performative writing within their research (Fairchild, 2018; Kenny, 2015; Ledger, 2010; McCaffrey & Edwards, 2015), also influenced this process. In particular the use of “data stories” in the critical ethnography of a school music therapy program presented by Scrine (2019) served as a practical inspiration for the use of performative writing techniques as part of the interpretive process.

Organising the data and determining the structure of accounts.

The initial step in account writing involved organising the large amount of data collected during the professional learning program to determine the structure of accounts. I aligned with the view expressed by critical ethnographer Madison (2012) who emphasises the agency of the researcher in grouping data based on how they wish to present findings (p.45). Madison further reminds researchers that although grouping similarities within the data is a priority for the meaning making process, the anticipated audience will also guide the ways in which data is organised (p. 44). Organising data within this stage of the study was in keeping with the overarching critical pragmatist philosophy that privileged the development of practical knowledge to enact change. As such, I sought to organise data in order to develop understandings about possible supportive work practices that would inform a music therapist audience.

To begin this process, every piece of text-based data from the field journal and interview transcripts pertaining to each teacher was copied into its own document. Informed by the methods described by critical educational ethnographer Carspecken (1996) and critical ethnographer Madison (2012), I reflected on the data in reference to key topics explored within the Music for Classroom Wellbeing Professional Learning program.

Firstly, I reflected on the topic “teacher needs” through reflecting on the guiding sub-question “what teacher support needs were addressed during Music for Classroom Wellbeing Professional Learning?” Through an iterative process of moving back and forward between the data documents for each teacher, I reflected on instances in which teachers had identified their support needs through dialogue, as well as my own perception of needs I had intended to support teachers with.

I then undertook the same process to explore the topic “facilitation practices” and respond to the guiding sub-question "What practices constituted the Music for Classroom

Wellbeing Professional Learning Program?” in order to address the identified teacher support needs. Through reading and re-reading the teacher data documents, a list of the facilitation practices I had used within the professional learning program was compiled. The list of music therapist practices was then further organised into categories “assessment and planning”, “implementation” and “professional learning community”.

The subsequent process of crafting ethnographic accounts involved making pragmatic decisions about how to structure the accounts. I chose to create what Madison (2012) describes the creation of a “muse map” (p.212) (See Appendix K) to organise the format for placing key topics into an order ready for the writing process to begin. Though there was understandably overlap between the challenges experienced for each teacher, I made the performative decision to highlight the most salient support need in the account of each teacher. While there was also significant overlap in the needs addressed for each teacher, I chose to focus on the support need that teachers described as being the most significant for them. For example, though many teachers spoke of the difficulty of managing the demands of staying in the profession, a discussion of this notion is confined to the account of Amelia, the teacher for whom this challenge seemed the most impactful. Furthermore, there was much overlap between the music therapist practices used with each teacher, and as such performative decisions were made to highlight different music therapist practices in each teacher account. For example, as investigation revealed that I had used similar practices when working to support the needs of early career teachers Kafka and Liz, these teacher stories were combined within a single account. Additionally, rather than outline every aspect of the program with each teacher, I chose to structure the accounts to present a chronological understanding of the practices used across the professional learning program. For example, assessment processes are outlined through the first two accounts, while attempts to promote sustainability through handing responsibility to the professional learning community are

described in the final account. These performative decisions were made so as to prevent repetition and attempt to craft stories about the professional learning program that were engaging to the reader.

Describing the professional learning program for each teacher.

While both critical ethnographic authors (Carspecken, 1996; Madison, 2012) describe the use of “codes” to further systematically categorise all data collected, making meaning took a more performative form within this research project. Madison (2012, p.210) also suggests that writing ethnography “through the lens and metaphor of performance” can offer the fieldworker a helpful means of making sense of their experience in the field.

After deciding on teacher support needs and practices to highlight with each teacher, I began the process of writing ethnographically informed accounts. This part of the meaning making process once again involved reading and re-reading the text-based data pertaining to my work with each teacher. Each account was then crafted by describing the key events within the professional learning program with each teacher, using original language as much as possible. The same procedure for writing accounts was used for each of the teachers. Referring to artifacts (including watching relevant video footage, listening to audio recordings or viewing planning documents) provided further detailed information of the events that had transpired where the field journal or interview transcript did not provide enough information to fully describe practices used. I sought to make explicit my unconscious assumptions, reactions, thoughts and feelings while interacting with the data through the process of writing accounts (Finlay, 2002).

Through the deep thinking needed for this writing process I was able to access what St. Pierre has termed “transgressive data” (2011, p. 621) that surfaced from my recollections, feelings and response to thinking about the work I had done. For example, listening to an audio recording of Amelia and I singing together while writing the account of Amelia caused

me to feel a deep sense of pride that informed the way I chose to present the story.

Additionally, listening to the recording caused me to consider the lyrics to the song in a way I had not while facilitating the program. Both my feeling of pride and the song lyrics could be constituted as “transgressive data” that further informed my developing understandings.

At times, I experienced a tension when describing aspects of teachers’ practice that did not sit comfortably with my own ideological perspective as a critical inclusive educator. In such instances, I attempted to write in such a way that it was clear to the reader that I was applying my own lens towards observing teachers act in the classrooms. However, I also tried to convey that I respected that all teachers were the experts in their own classroom and could choose to engage in the professional learning program I was offering in a way that was meaningful and felt comfortable to them. As teachers had volunteered to take part in a professional learning program, they also appeared to be open to engaging in critique and reflection on their teaching practices with me in a way that did not appear to hamper my relationship with participants.

Developing interpretations through writing.

Carspecken (1996) describes detailed analytical process in which the critical ethnographer develops understandings within the field of study and then draws on existing social-theoretical models to explain the findings. However, they also add that “You can be very creative when doing this sort of analysis; there is definitely no single way to perform it” (p. 202). Thus, rather than subscribe to the specific analytic processes presented by Carspecken, within this study, developing interpretations about how the practices used within the professional learning program appeared to support each teacher occurred through the act of account writing. Thus, as I wrote about the professional learning program with each teacher, I chose to explain my decision making about the practices used with resources drawn from the academic discourse about diverse practices of education and music therapy. As I

reflected on my work with each teacher, I drew from theoretical resources to support or refute my inferences about the needs of teachers. In this way I intended to demonstrate the potential influence of widespread macrolevel phenomenon on the professional learning program.

In addition to the internal dialogue traditionally associated with engaging in reflexive analytic practices the writing process itself stimulated reflexivity through “giving rise to new reflections, deepening pre-existing ideas, or subjecting them to a new gaze” (Caetano, 2017, p. 76). Similarly, engaging in external conversations with supervisors and colleagues further stimulated reflexivity and allowed me to uncover new ways of thinking about the ways in which teachers had been supported through the professional learning program.

Emergence of themes and re-crafting.

Finlay (2008) further discusses the importance of time away from “initial pre-understandings to gain sufficient distance from which to critically and reflexively interrogate them” (p.17). This occurred naturally within the study of Music for Wellbeing Professional Learning as part way through crafting the ethnographic accounts I went on maternity leave for a period of eight months. Thus it was a significant period of time after the conclusion of the professional learning program the accounts underwent a final iterative crafting process to respond to the sub-question “How did teachers describe being supported?”

This further reflection on data resulted in the emergence of themes pertaining to the way teachers were supported within this study. Within the context of making meaning in this study of Music for Classroom Wellbeing Professional Learning, the musical connotations of the term “theme” (connoting a recognisable or recurring melodic or rhythmic pattern) is acknowledged.

At this point I engaged in critical reflection on the ways in which teachers described being supported and listened for recurring or recognisable thematic material. This involved returning to the teacher data documents to explore the topic “sustained practices and benefits”

and responding to the sub-question “what were the sustained practices and benefits from teachers’ engagement in Music for Classroom Wellbeing Professional Learning?” Responses to this guiding sub-question encompassed reflecting on both instances where teachers and school leadership staff had described sustained practices and benefits from the professional learning program through dialogue or interview, as well as instances where I had perceived sustained practices and benefits myself. Thematic commonalities between the described sustained practices and benefits were explored across the data pertaining to each teacher. Ongoing reflection on the intention to generate knowledge that would guide future music therapist practices in schools through this process led to the emergence of three interconnected themes related to the way teachers had been supported to grow through the professional learning program; enrich musicality, develop teaching practices and foster self-care. These themes are elucidated as “interconnected domains of teacher growth” within the following part of this thesis. The five teacher accounts were then further re-crafted into three chapters to emphasise each domain of teacher growth and provide a reflection on key learnings. While other music therapists have written extensively about music therapy practices that support the personal and social development of students in mainstream school settings, addressing student needs was not the focus of this research project. As such I chose to emphasise the music therapy informed practices used with teachers by deleting references to the particular music therapy methods used with students.

Synthesising the findings through meta-ethnography.

After crafting five ethnographic accounts to illustrate the interconnected domains of teacher growth, a new phase of interpretative meaning making began. I drew from the process of conducting a meta-ethnography presented by Noblit and Hare (1988) to synthesise findings from the ethnographic accounts and respond to the final sub-question “What principles guided the practice of supporting teachers within the Music for Classroom

Wellbeing Professional Learning Program?” As the accounts described similar practices from within a single study, the technique of reciprocal translations as synthesis was employed (Noblit & Hare, 1988). Importantly, as both researcher and writer of the ethnographic accounts, I was able to supplement the information within the ethnographic accounts with the original data source when additional information was beneficial to the translation process. For example, though a description of the process of writing a song parody within the first professional learning program is only discussed within the ethnographic account pertaining to Amelia, my knowledge that all teachers had participated in this process contributed to the development of the synthesised understandings.

Once again, the critical pragmatist philosophy of this study directed the process towards the development of practice knowledge for music therapists. As previously outlined in the philosophical orientation Chapter Four, conducting a meta-ethnography within this project entailed steps to integrate understandings about the practices that encompassed the process of supporting teachers. This necessitated translating the accounts into one another to develop context-bound points of consideration rather than developing overarching generalisations (Noblit & Hare, 1988).

Identifying common practices within accounts.

I began the meta-ethnographic synthesis by exploring relationships between the texts related to practices used to support teachers. In the procedure described by Noblit & Hare (1988), the researcher translates studies dependent on their own world view. I initially used the tenets of previous music therapy practice in schools when interpreting practices used across the ethnographic accounts. The first wave of inductive exploration identified concepts from a contemporary music therapy “treatment model” framework that had been used within the professional learning program to drive assessment, planning, implementation and establishing music in the school culture. Use of such a clinical framework is a key feature of

traditional music therapy practice in schools (McFerran, 2014, p. 328), and is growing in use within contemporary teacher training programs (Kriewaldt, McLean Davies, Rice, Rickards, & Acquaro, 2017). Additional inquiry revealed the use of concepts across the ethnographic accounts that aligned with the principles of community music therapy in general (Stige & Aarø, 2011), as well as specific features related to the practice of community music therapy in schools (Rickson & McFerran, 2014). Furthermore, typical practices from contemporary descriptions of teacher professional learning (Mockler, 2013; C. Stewart, 2014) were also found to occur across the accounts. Many commonalities between previously described music therapy and professional learning concepts and practices appeared within the accounts. However, the ways in which music therapy and professional learning practices had been combined within the accounts was not able to be captured with existing theoretical concepts. Further interpretation processes were engaged to move from the current “aggregative” (Noblit & Hare, Chapter 1 p. 2) understandings of the practices used based on existing theoretical constructs.

Systems-based exploration of Music for Classroom Wellbeing Professional Learning.

As previously outlined in the discussion of a critical pragmatist philosophical orientation in Chapter Four, Ulrich (2007) recommends the use of an ecological systems approach when envisioning the use of professional practices. An ecological approach is further relevant within this project due to the ecological nature of community music therapy informed practices (Stige & Aarø, 2011). Additionally, an ecological systems approach that explored teachers’ context was used within this study. It was understood that effective teacher professional learning sits “at the intersection of professional context and personal experience and requiring both professional and personal relevance to lead to changes in practice” (Mockler, 2013, p. 42).

The next phase of meta-ethnographic interpretation thus comprised of applying a systems lens (Bronfenbrenner, 1992) to the identified practices that had transpired across the ethnographic accounts. This illuminative process involved exploring the different social relationships involved in the professional learning program and their contextual position and interaction relative to local and macro phenomena, illustrated in Figure 2.3.

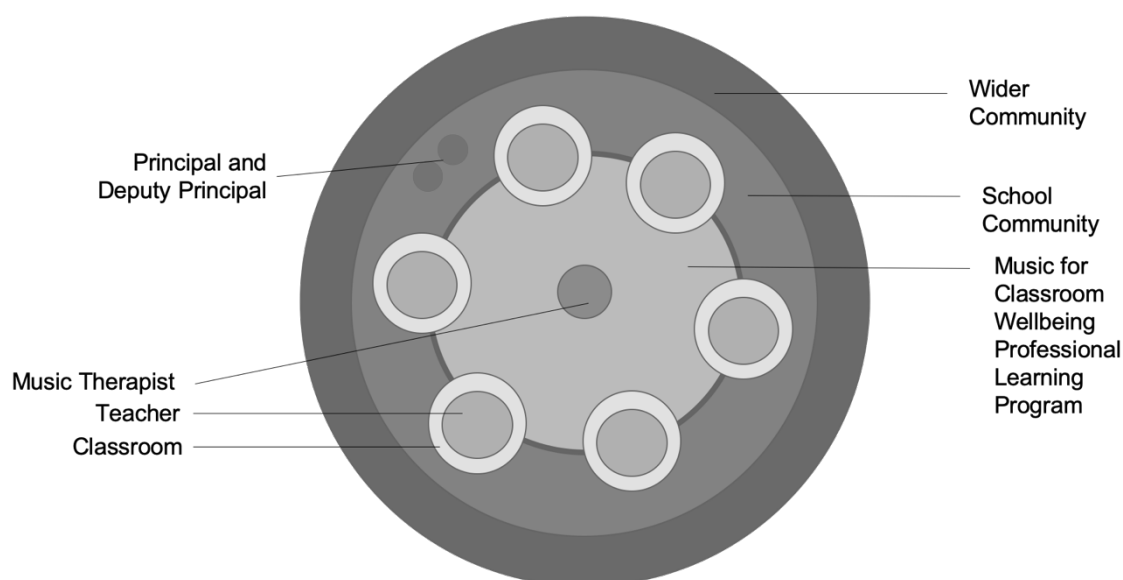


Figure 2.3 Systems-informed depiction of the field of study in context.

As in the previous depiction of the field of study, the large circular space between each teacher and the facilitating music therapist is representative of the Music for Classroom Wellbeing Professional Learning Program itself, taking place across a range of sites within the school. The surrounding concentric circles represent the school context, and the wider world beyond the school.

The exploration drawing on ecological thinking further involved the use of diagrams to elucidate the centrality of teachers within this study, illustrated in Figure 2.4. This depiction is understood to directly contrast to the typical representation of students as central within school systems illustrated elsewhere in the literature (Rudasill, Snyder, Levinson, & L.

Adelson, 2018). Within Figure 2.4, teacher is depicted as central within the classroom context.

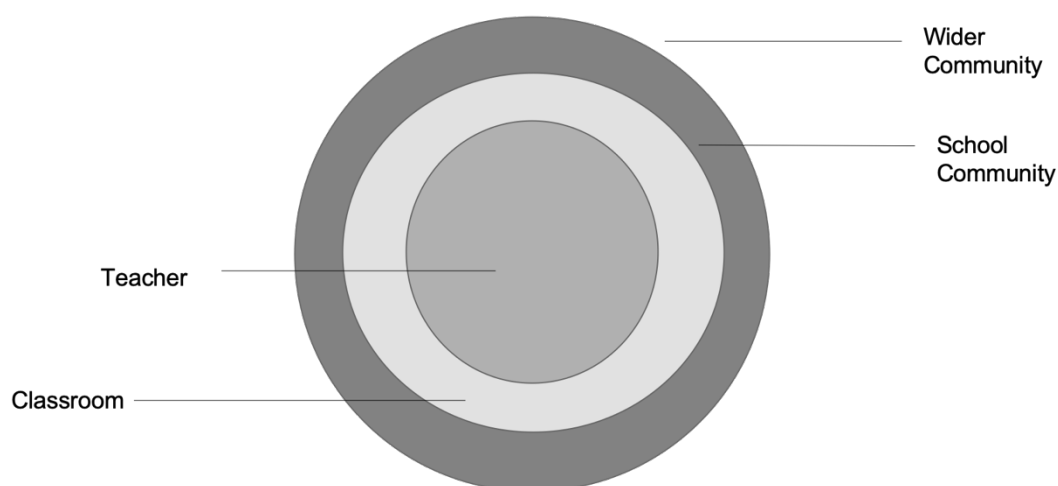


Figure 2.4 Systems-informed depiction of teacher as central in context.

Systems-informed reflection was also used as a means of considering the interaction between the use of music, teacher participants, and context identified in the translation of accounts. This process resulted in the emergence of Figure 2.5 to conceptually explore the interaction between music and people in the Music for Classroom Wellbeing Professional Learning Program. Figure 2.5 extends on the systems-informed depiction of the field of study in context by illustrating the relational nature of the element of music within Music for Classroom Wellbeing Professional Learning. It was within this space that the intentional practice of musical engagement between music therapist, teachers and students took place.

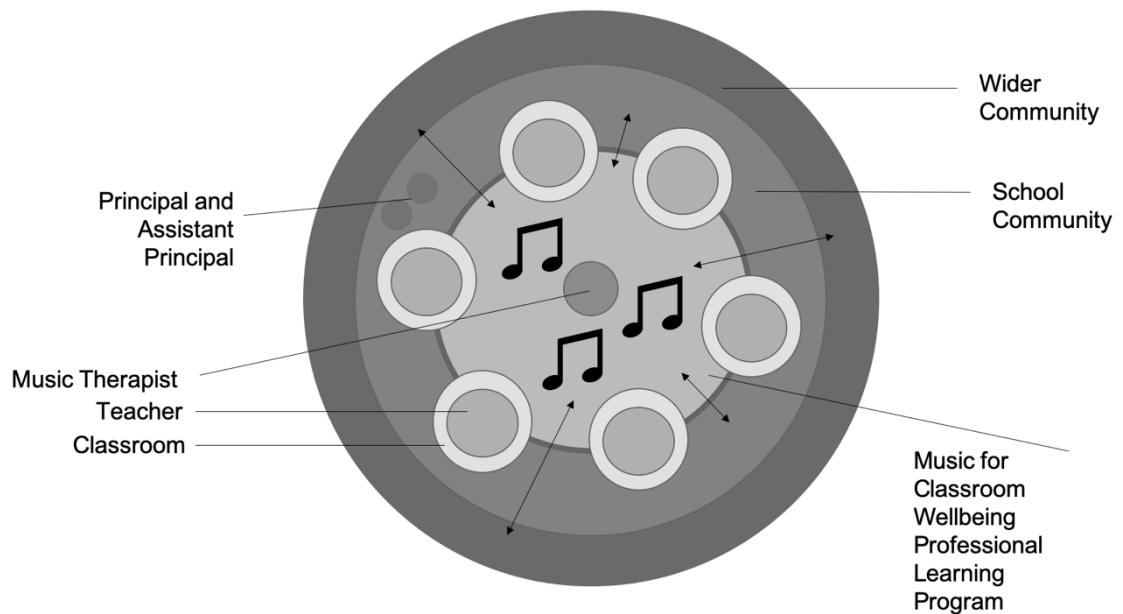


Figure 2.5 Interaction between music, people and context within the Music for Classroom Wellbeing Professional Learning Program.

The quavers in the diagram depict the element of music as a connector, beginning with the musical engagements in the Music for Classroom Wellbeing Professional Learning Program. The arrows depict the movement of music from within the professional learning program out into the school and wider school communities, and back again.

The musical engagements depicted in Figure 2.5 radiated past the confines of the professional learning program and into the school community and external communities beyond the school mediated by the actions of the teachers. Thus, through the process of sharing music externally, the teachers' experience of their classroom and place in the school community was altered. While this process began with the sharing of music, numerous other things, both concrete and abstract were also shared as a result of this process.

Developing theoretical understandings.

Noblit & Hare encourage researchers to theorise through conducting a “lines-of-argument synthesis” and make clinical inferences about “what can we say of the whole..., based on selective studies of the parts?” (Chapter 5, p. 2). In his seminal essay on building an

interpretive theory of culture, Geertz (1973) describes the process of making clinical inferences through attempting to place symbolic acts (noticed through observation) into an “intelligible frame” (p.26). Within this project, clinical inferences were made to describe a coherent whole understanding from the personalised practices used with teachers described in each ethnographic account. Further sustained reflection on the interaction between individuals within the professional learning program, musical engagements and facilitation practices thus led to the emergence of initial findings related to the contextual structure of the professional learning program in relation to the particular practices used. An initial lines-of-argument synthesis incorporating the translation of the relationship between central elements across the accounts was drafted. This lines-of-argument synthesised a consideration of the context of the program alongside the community music therapy processes of using the affordances of music to create positive growth and flourishing.

As per the suggestion of Noblit & Hare (1988), a final interpretive phase was begun at this point to synthesise the translations and express theoretical understandings from the study. M. Cahill, Robinson, Pettigrew, Galvin, and Stanley (2018) suggest the benefit of collaboration as part of the process of developing inferences through meta-ethnography. A conversation between myself and my primary supervisor at this point highlighted the need for the identification of the assumptions that had led to the descriptions within the ethnographically informed accounts. This interpretive phase required a consideration of the practices that had been eschewed within the professional learning program in order to ensure that the synthesis fully represented the depth of practice conveyed across accounts. Doing so allowed the revelation of aspects that were hidden from the ethnographic accounts. This included descriptions of the particular needs of students in the classrooms. The ways in which music was being used that countered the typical practice of school musical engagements was also uncovered. Through the identification of elements that were hidden from the accounts,

the centrality of other elements (in particular, the focus on teachers and the practices involved of leveraging the affordances of music) became apparent.

Attention then turned towards the development of metaphors to capture the role of the central elements of music, teacher, and music therapist presented in Figure 2.5. To Noblit & Hare “a metaphor is adequate when it is the simplest concept that accounts for the phenomena” (1988, Chapter 2 p. 7). Through a prolonged period of immersion in the interpretative process, two metaphors emerged that appeared to succinctly portray the complexity of the relationship between myself as music therapist, and teachers within the Music for Classroom Wellbeing Professional Learning Program. These metaphors were viewing “teacher as focus” and “music therapist as enabler of sharing”.

Expressing the synthesis.

The final phase of conducting a meta-ethnographic synthesis involved responding to the guiding question “what principles guided the practice of supporting teachers through the professional learning program?” Within this phase, the metaphors were expressed as guiding practice principles to inform a music therapist audience. The overarching principles that thus emerged to have guided the practice of supporting teachers within the professional learning program included the use of teacher focused practices and practices that enabled sharing. The new theoretical knowledge developed through meta-ethnography included integrating knowledge of the principles that guided the practice of supporting teachers, with the understandings of how teachers were supported as discovered through the account writing process. Through this integrative process, understandings of the new theoretical construct of classroom wellbeing emerged as an overarching framework for considering the way teachers were supported within this professional learning program.

Finally, the synthesised outcomes of the meta-ethnography were inscribed for a music therapist audience presented in Chapter Eight. A typical music therapist working in a school

setting, without depth of knowledge of pedagogical practices was envisioned as the audience for the synthesised findings presented within this chapter.

Noblit & Hare (1988) discuss the ways in which part of the meaning from the meta-ethnographic synthesis involves contextualising the synthesis in relation to disciplinary debate. As such, further consideration of implications of this new practice knowledge are outlined in Chapter Ten.

The end of Part Two of the story.

Part Two of the story has provided a detailed description of the approach and ethnographically informed research methods used within this study of a Music for Classroom Wellbeing Professional Learning Program. Within this chapter, the recruitment processes that contributed towards setting up the field of study were detailed, as well as processes of meaning making through collecting data as coperformer, crafting accounts, and conducting a meta-ethnographic synthesis. A summary of the approach described in this chapter is presented in Table 2.4.

Table 2.4

Summary of the Philosophical, Methodological and Theoretical Orientations, Guiding Questions, Meaning Making Processes Used the Study of the Music for Classroom Wellbeing Professional Learning Program and Location of Findings within this Thesis

Critical Pragmatist Philosophy		
Ethnographically Informed Methodological Perspective		
Theoretical Foundation of Community Music Therapy and Critical Inclusive Education Approaches to Practice		
Guiding Question/s	Meaning Making Processes	Location of Findings
How can teachers be supported through a Music for Classroom Wellbeing Professional Learning Program?	Collecting Data as Coperformer	Chapter 6, 7,8,9
What practices constituted the Music for Classroom Wellbeing Professional Learning Program?	Crafting Ethnographic Accounts	Chapter 6,7,8
What teacher support needs were addressed during the program?		
How did teachers describe being supported?		
What principles guided the practice of supporting teachers through the professional learning program?	Conducting a Meta-Ethnographic Synthesis	Chapter 9

Part Three: Ethnographic Accounts of the Practice of Supporting Teachers

The third part to the story of this thesis provides a response to the overarching research question “How were teachers supported within Music for Classroom Wellbeing Professional Learning?” The following part thus contains five crafted ethnographic accounts that illuminate the ways in which teachers were supported to enrich musicality, develop teaching practices and foster self-care. In keeping with the theoretical foundations of this project outlined in Chapter Four, use of the words “enrich”, “develop”, and “foster” in relation to these three domains of teacher growth is intended to denote the non-measurable nature of teachers’ growth throughout their participation in the professional learning program.

These domains of teacher growth are understood to be interconnected. For example, it is understood that through the process of enriching musicality, Kate was simultaneously able to foster self-care. However, within this thesis, the following chapters each emphasise one domain of teacher growth. A summary of the key learnings gleaned from working with the teachers in reference to the emphasised domain of teacher growth is presented at the end of each chapter.

Each of the five teacher accounts within this part of the story follows the same fundamental structure. This includes:

- An introduction to the teacher in the context of their classroom
- An exploration of the practices used to support each teacher
- An illustration of the diverse and varied ways that teachers chose to explore music and wellbeing in their classroom
- A comment about the sustained practices and benefits of the program for each teacher.

For ease of reader comprehension, *italics* have been used to identify direct quotes from written data sources (for example, field notes and emails) within the following chapters. Additionally, quotation marks are used to signify direct quotes from audio recorded data sources (for example, conversations during a session or formal interviews). The integration of a discussion of my own interpretations in reference to the literature within these accounts is in keeping with an ethnographically informed approach that understands writing as an emergent and analytic process (Mills & Morton, 2013). Planning documentation, song lyrics and chords, and a link to song recordings for original songs described within this part of the story are all located in Appendix H. A list of the chapters that encompass this part of the story is found in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1

Chapters that Encompass Part Three: Ethnographic Accounts of the Practice of Supporting Teachers

Chapter	Title
Chapter Six	Supporting Teachers to Enrich Musicality – The Accounts of Justine and Kate
Chapter Seven	Supporting Teachers to Develop Teaching Practices – The Accounts of Kafka, Liz and Jen
Chapter Eight	Supporting Teachers to Foster Self-Care – The Account of Amelia

Chapter Six: Supporting Justine and Kate to Enrich Musicality

Chapter introduction.

This chapter includes the first two ethnographic accounts and illustrates the first domain of teacher growth within Music for Classroom Wellbeing Professional Learning. The practices that made up the early stages of the professional learning program are outlined. Within this chapter, the accounts of teachers Justine and Kate are presented to illustrate the ways in which teachers were supported to enrich musicality.

While it was understood within the professional learning program that all people are “musical”, the term “musicality” was understood to denote a level of sensitivity to changes in musical elements when musicking. Thus, within the context of this chapter, enriching musicality within this professional learning program refers to the ways in which the teachers were supported to develop their comfort at “being musical”. This encompassed improved comfort when musicking on their own and taking part in musical engagements with others. This chapter further depicts the ways in which, through their enrichment of musicality, teachers in turn enriched their ability to leverage the affordances of music in their classroom in such a manner that promoted classroom wellbeing. In particular, the use of music to promote positive student-teacher relationships is highlighted.

The accounts of Justine and Kate were also crafted to highlight the systemic challenge of wide-ranging student needs, as well as the significant time pressures faced by teachers in the current educational climate. The collaborative and resource-oriented dimensions of the community music therapy informed approach to this professional learning program are also illustrated within these accounts.

The account of Justine.

Getting to know Justine.

Justine's existing music for classroom wellbeing practice.

I met grade-five teacher Justine at lunchtime in the staffroom a couple of days after I held the staff meeting recruitment presentation. After providing her consent to take part in the research project, Justine told me that she already had an existing classroom music practice for addressing her students' readiness to learn and emotional regulation. She explained that her students frequently returned to class after breaks with unresolved issues stemming from their time in the playground. This led to them being unsettled and finding it difficult to engage in their learning. I was not at all surprised to hear this, as both my experience of working in and reading about contemporary schools supported the idea that many students find it difficult to engage in the contemporary classroom (Smyth, McNerney, & Fish, 2013).

Justine had come across the idea of using music to support students' readiness to learn when she attended a parent information session at her daughter's high school. On return to her classroom she asked each of her students to write down a song that made them feel happy onto a post-it note. Justine described that from then on, each day after lunch one of the songs was played so the students could "have some down time and chill out". Justine also described putting on a 'happy song' in the middle of a lesson when she perceived that students were losing focus. Many authors have written about the advantages of teachers working to actively change their classroom climate and promote students' readiness to learn. In their book synthesising evidence from education and cognitive psychology research, Hattie and Yates (2013, p. 128) outline the benefits of teachers developing a warm classroom climate to foster student engagement in their learning.

Justine also hoped that playing 'happy songs' supported her students' emotional regulation. Indeed, it is generally understood in the music therapy literature that listening to

personally preferred music can impact on the emotion of individuals (B. L. Wheeler, 2015, p. 452). While it has traditionally been understood that people choose to listen to music that promotes positive emotional experiences, a recent shift in understanding has seen authors explore the ways in which, at times, individuals engage in music listening with the intention of feeling challenging emotions (McFerran, 2015; Saarikallio, Gold, & McFerran, 2015). In the context of schooling, music therapy authors have also discussed the use of preferred music in the classroom to engage students in their education (Cheong-Clinch, 2009; McFerran, Crooke, & Bolger, 2017). I recalled that in an example of practices described by McFerran, Crooke, and Bolger (2017) the music therapist worked with the school music teacher to develop an assignment in which students created their own personalised “mixed tape”. I began to reflect on how I might support Justine to extend her classroom practice informed by the music therapy literature.

Justine told me that the ‘happy song’ they had listened to in class yesterday was the theme song of a local football club that Melburnians typically love to hate. She joked to me that she had thought to herself “oh well, it’s what makes them happy”, implying that she personally did not like the song. This impressed me, as it demonstrated that Justine understood the importance of using student-preferred music when working to address the needs of her class. However, Justine’s comment also challenged my assumptions that this program was going to be about supporting teachers who had no existing expertise in this area.

Observing a ‘happy song’ in action.

Over the next few weeks I began to get to know each teacher in their classroom context. In keeping with the suggested model of action and reflection outlined by Rickson and McFerran (2014, p. 45), the first thing I did with Justine was observe her teach her grade of 21 ten and 11-year-old students. When Justine introduced me to the class it became evident that many students recognised me from my presence during the dance program I had

observed the previous year. I wrote in my field journal that I felt immediately accepted. Bolger (2015) describes the importance spending time building relationships with “players” (p. 97) when preparing to work collaboratively in community music therapy programs. Spending time “hanging out” in the early stages of participatory community music therapy projects has also been described as a central part of building participant “buy in” (Bolger et al., 2018). I felt confident that spending so much time at the school the previous year had expedited this process of establishing relationships with both students and staff.

As soon as I had been introduced to the grade, I settled into my observation at the side of the classroom. A student then shouted out “Can we have a ‘happy song’?” Justine replied by asking the grade “why would you like a ‘happy song’?” After a couple of students explained that there had been an incident during playtime, Justine called the entire grade to come and stand at the front of the room, holding the pile of ‘happy song’ Post-it notes behind her back. She asked students one at a time to choose right or left until eventually there was only one left containing the name of the chosen ‘happy song’. It seemed that Justine seemed comfortable to share power through engaging in dialogue with her students. The song started and Justine turned the music up. The students sang and danced along while Justine remained seated on her wheelie stool, smiling.

I recalled music therapy authors commenting on the ways in which, as well as impacting personal emotions, music can also impact on the climate of a particular environment (Aasgaard, 1999; Kittay, 2008). The feel-good quality of the pop music was infectious, and I found myself taking part by singing along to the chorus. I wondered why Justine wasn’t joining in with the singing or dancing and had the opportunity to ask her about this a couple of weeks later. Justine told me:

Yeah, see I don’t even feel comfortable doing that; even the other day when I had the song on for the kids, they said, “come on Mrs. [*surname withheld*] come in and jump

with us” and I just said “nope, no”. Sometimes I think you’ve got to remember to keep that boundary, you know, I’m [the] teacher, I’m not going to be seen as; I know when we have the disco at the end of the year, yes, we all get involved and I’ll go and dance with the kids but I feel like I’m stepping over a mark there if I do that [in the classroom].

Strain, Wilson, and Dunlap (2011) write of the need for teachers to enact clear boundaries between themselves and their students to promote positive classroom behaviour. However, authors presenting an alternative perspective have described the ways in which such boundaries may become blurred when engaging in dialogic classroom practices with students who have disengaged from their schooling (Smyth et al., 2013). Smyth et al. (2013) further argue for the role of teachers in reimagining the classroom as a “relational space” through creating a climate of trust and honesty between teacher and students. I knew that one of the affordances of engaging musically with others was the potential for creating connection (Andsell & DeNora, 2014). Thus, I felt that challenging Justine to blur the perceived boundary between herself and her students had the potential for deepening the relationships between them and contributing to students’ readiness to learn. However, I also recalled that the potential to develop “musical intimacy” when engaging musically with others had the potential for revealing vulnerabilities (Medcalf, 2016). I wondered whether this was the reason that Justine was apprehensive about dancing with her students? Medcalf (2016) encourages community music therapists to deeply reflect on local context and culture when considering boundaries. I thus questioned whether it would even be appropriate for me to encourage Justine to blur the boundaries of her work.

When the song finished, the students began moving back to their chairs without being asked. Justine then spent a couple of minutes checking in with individual students to see whether they were feeling better. Not surprisingly, they were – I personally had felt a

palpable shift in my own mood. The lesson then shifted to a literacy focus, beginning with the whole grade reading spelling words aloud as a group at a fast pace. While this felt incredibly boring in contrast to the dialogic and participatory activity of a few minutes ago, the students and Justine looked like they were having fun. I wrote “*They seem engaged though – why is this?*” I suspected that, as Justine had intended, the ‘happy song’ activity had allowed the students to process the challenges that had emerged in the playground and ready themselves to engage in literacy learning.

Assessment conversation.

Previous authors writing about music therapist/teacher support have depicted the importance of dedicating time to gather information about student needs from teachers at the beginning of similar projects (McFerran, Crooke, & Bolger, 2017; McFerran et al., 2015; Rickson, 2010a; Rickson & McFerran, 2014). After spending time observing each teacher practice in the classroom, I created an interview template to glean further details from each teacher. At the time I referred to this as an “assessment interview” and viewed it as part of a process of data collection. I retrospectively realised that during this interview I was gaining data from teachers in a similar manner to the practice of conducting a typical music therapy assessment (B. L. Wheeler, 2015, p. 2). However, as this was a teacher professional learning program, instead of beginning the assessment by finding out about the needs of the students in each teachers’ classroom, questions about the teachers preceded questions about students. As well as helping me get to know Justine, this process allowed me to start to build rapport – an important component of any community music therapy work (B. L. Wheeler, 2015, p. 58) or guided teacher professional learning process (P. Hall & Simeral, 2008, p. 36).

I chose to begin with asking the teachers how they identified with the concepts “music” and “wellbeing”. The first thing Justine told me was that she had specialised in student wellbeing while studying her Master of Education. Justine described the way she had

spent the bulk of her career working with multiple class groups as a library teacher before being transferred against her will back into the everyday classroom two years earlier. Though I respected Justine's wishes not to openly discuss her own personal wellbeing ("you're opening a can of worms there!") she did allude to the challenges she was facing in the classroom when she stated:

...whenever I put their happy song on it brings a smile to my face and I just forget and I think, "You know what? Things aren't that bad", and to watch these kids, you know, jump around for three minutes and have an absolute ball, then, you know, things aren't as bad as what they've always seemed.

Justine also expressed that "I've really enjoyed having that one group of kids that you can build that relationship with" since teaching her own grade. Mockler (2013) foregrounds teacher "identity work" (p. 42) when conceptualising teacher professional learning within the current standards based education climate. It seemed that Justine had used what Mockler refers to as "identity anchors" (p. 42) to frame her professional identity, and connect her personal identity to an understanding of why she chose to be in the profession. I recalled the assumptions I had made after observing Justine's teaching practice about her significant expertise in considering the wellbeing needs of her students and building classroom relationships. These assumptions began to make sense.

When I asked Justine about her personal experience of music, it emerged that there had been some distress associated with music learning in her youth. Justine recalled sitting at the piano crying after being hit over the knuckles by the music teacher because she wasn't holding her fingers correctly. While she had gone on to enjoy playing clarinet in the high school band, even performing on stage at the state theatre, she hadn't played music since that time. Stevens' (2009) doctoral thesis contends that the previous musical experiences of primary school teachers has a direct impact on their willingness to engage in classroom-based

musical activities. Stevens also describes the ways in which teacher participants of her study found previous humiliating musical experiences to be extremely memorable and contributed towards the development of a negative musical identity. As Justine was already using music in her classroom, I was confused about why she wanted to join the program given her past experiences. When I asked, Justine told me that she was adamant that she wasn't interested in playing an instrument or singing as part of this professional learning program. However, she wanted to do something that "was a bit different" and "fun" to extend her use of music in the classroom, as her students weren't timetabled to receive music as a specialist subject and "music is not my strength".

One aspect of effective teacher professional learning is that teachers are supported to extend an aspect of their existing practice to address student learning needs (P. Stewart, 2007). I began to get the sense that Justine wanted me to support her to build on her existing use of the 'happy song' activity to address students' engagement in learning activities. I also remembered a recent study conducted by a music therapy researcher and colleagues that had identified positive outcomes from teachers breaking up classroom teaching activities with song listening and singing (Rickson, Legg, & Reynolds, 2018). Within this project, researchers found that even those teachers with poor musical self-efficacy were able to engage their students when the focus of the activity was positive participation rather than music learning.

After finding out information about each teacher, I then proceeded to ask about the wellbeing needs of the students in each classroom. The changing cultural demographic of the Australian classroom (particularly in lower socioeconomic areas, such as the location of this school) means that the student make-up of the everyday classroom has become increasingly diverse (Comber, 2011). This, coupled with legislation pertaining to the rights of all students to attend their local mainstream school, instated in Australia in the late 20th century

(Australian Government, 1992), serves to place teachers under increasing pressure to cater to a wide variety of student wellbeing needs. It was helpful that I had already spent a session observing Justine teach, as I recalled that this appeared to be the case in Justine's grade.

When I asked Justine about the wellbeing needs of students in her classroom, Justine told me that (in keeping with trends reported by the Chaldean Australian Society (2014)) many of her students had come to Australia as refugees from Iraq and Syria over the past few years. She also mentioned that one boy in her grade was occasionally coming into school late and in tears. When Justine discretely tried to ask him about it, he wouldn't answer, instead saying "nah I'm good, I'm good" and attempting to mask his crying. Justine went on to tell me that he was the one student who would approach her when he had experienced an issue in the playground and ask her for a 'happy song' so he could "forget about it". Promoting understandings of the way in which individuals can engage in music listening in both healthy and unhealthy ways is a recently emerging discourse in music therapy. Authors suggest the benefits of engaging with young people to support them to develop their skills at appropriating music in healthy ways (McFerran & Saarikallio, 2014). When conversing with Justine, I took the opportunity to respond to the student wellbeing needs she described and frame them in relation to her existing classroom 'happy song' practice to suggest this as a possible direction for our future work together.

Justine agreed, explaining that while some of the boys had made huge gains in their in-class behaviour, once they went outside their emotions could "take over". Working on developing students' abilities at self-regulation has previously been described to be effective when integrated with arts practices (Kindekens et al., 2014). I drew on my knowledge of contemporary music therapy practice approaches that aimed to support the emotional expression of adolescents in healthy ways through the construction of personal playlists (McFerran, Crooke, & Bolger, 2017). Synthesising my understanding of Justine's musical

resources, personal interest and the perceived needs of her students, I suggested this activity to Justine, who seemed eager to begin.

Preparing to use music to address student learning.

Creating a term planner.

The week after the assessment conversation, Justine and I met for half an hour in the school library to generate an outline for our focus each week of the following term. In keeping with the findings of the Chapter Two Critical Interpretive Synthesis, a curriculum framework was used to maximise the potential that teachers could attribute class time to musical engagements. Justine shared that she had identified an intention from the Personal and Social Capability Curriculum Guidelines (Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority, 2016) about students learning to regulate their emotions. Moore (2017) conducted a historical review of theorising outside of the music therapy discourse regarding the phenomenon of music-induced emotions. She concluded that the relationship between music and emotion is highly complex and still only partially understood. However, Moore also suggested that using music as a regulatory strategy to manage challenging emotions was a viable practice intention for music therapists. Self-regulation of emotions is a central component of the Personal and Social Capability. As such, I could see that supporting Justine with the skills to address this goal through the act of students creating their own music playlist would be an appropriate endeavour for our work together.

Authors in the field of education frequently describe the efficacy of teaching practice that involves direct instruction in which lessons are planned to address particular, pre-identified learning intentions (Hattie, 2012, p. 66). Such pre-planned direct instruction is described to be particularly helpful when addressing student social and emotional learning (H. Cahill et al., 2014). The clearly-defined student learning intention, coupled with the easy-going nature of Justine, made this planning process seem to flow with ease, and in 20 minutes

I had typed up a rough term planner documenting our weekly focus as well as a template of a word document playlist for the students to fill in week by week, and shared it with Justine. I recognised the comfort I felt from having a clear plan to work towards, and wrote in my field notes *“Justine is excited, and even said ‘well if you need to go we can keep working on it without you...’”* Later on in the program Justine commented that the repetitive nature of the playlist creation session was something that helped her ability to lead the session without my help:

At the moment it’s so repetitive that the kids know what’s coming up but we just change the focus of the emotion...being repetitive is quite easy at the moment so I can just go on with it and the kids know what they're doing.

I left this meeting thrilled that Justine was already talking about continuing with music making when the program has finished without even being prompted.

Co-facilitating the first session.

Justine and I began working with the students on the creation of their personal “Music for Wellbeing” playlists. I began the first session by introducing the students to some of the tenets of healthy music listening based on the music therapy literature base described earlier (Saarikallio et al., 2015). After doing this, Justine explained the importance of taking the time to really feel challenging emotions rather than brushing them aside. Justine then asked the class for a student who was happy to volunteer the song that matched their behaviour when they felt sad and most of the students raised their hand. I was interested to see the time Justine took to democratically select a student, rather than simply choosing one herself. As Justine set up the YouTube clip of the chosen song on the interactive whiteboard, I encouraged the class to close their eyes and tune into how they were feeling before we played the music. Justine followed this up by giving the students permission to remain at the desks while the song was playing if that was their choice, reinforcing that “this is a very individual

thing”. Bolger (2015) speaks of positive and reciprocal collaborative relationships within a community music therapy process when both music therapist and participant can each bring their own strengths to engage in an activity on an equal footing. I felt as though Justine and I were collaborating well together.

The song; *Faded* by Alan Walker (2015) began playing and sounds of a minor arpeggiated piano introduction filled the classroom. I was stunned by the appropriateness of the student’s song choice and wrote in my field notes that “*you could feel the energy and mood drop*”. The students were silent until the last bars of the sad song sounded; Justine or I couldn’t have picked a more illustrative “sad song” if we tried. When the song ended, I described how the music had impacted on my mood, then opened this out to a whole class dialogue. In a critical ethnography of classroom based “democratic music listening”, Silverman (2013) shared the ways in which, at times, students took the unfamiliar opportunity for dialogue to share what they perceived the right answers to be, rather than taking the chance to express their opinion. While it appeared that, in this classroom, students were encouraged to share their own thoughts, I admitted that it was possible that students were responding with what they thought they should say. After a little while Justine entered the conversation, saying:

...and remember, [as] we said last week, it’s important to work through that emotion, not to ignore it, not to shut it out and say “I’ve gotta move on”; sit quietly in your bedroom, close the door, in the lounge room, put some headphones on, go through that emotion, experience that emotion but then decide, what am I going to do with it now? Am I going to be in a sad mood all day? And have mum being grumpy because I’m sad? Or, am I going to lift myself out of it?

I was struck by Justine’s ability to naturally speak to her students in relation to this activity and felt that I couldn’t have responded better myself. Reflecting on my feelings of

surprise caused me to note my own tendency to forget the immense amount of professional expertise held by teachers. I thought back to the wellbeing needs of her students as expressed by Justine a few weeks earlier, thrilled that the content of the session linked to these so directly, and that Justine was beginning to take ownership of its delivery.

The session continued with Justine modelling to students how they could use music to address a “flat mood” by asking the student what his happy song would be, putting this on YouTube and encouraging all the students to get up and dance. The mood changed again as all the students joined in together, following actions led by the student who had chosen the songs, and singing along in unison. The class was particularly loud when singing the chorus:

Different people, different places

Stand together (we stand together)

Singing with one voice, nothing can ever

Stop us or hold us down

And though we may fall out of time

The rhythm’s there for all of us to find (Bromley, Chelva, Kim, & Pyke, 2012).

As they sang, my heart ached with the emotion I was feeling. I glanced at Justine, and noticed that her eyes, like mine, were watery. When the song finished, I told the students this, congratulating them on their efforts. Justine expressed that this was the first time she had seen them all join in with a ‘happy song’, and together we asked the students to rate their mood and determine whether they had felt this shift. The students answered with a resounding “YES”, with Justine summarising that “I think the vibe in the room is definitely different now than it was 5 minutes ago”. For me, taking part in this ‘happy song’ experience with the class aligned with the experience of others who have reported on the ways in which listening to music in a group can enhance a sense of connection with others (McFerran & Saarikallio, 2014). Additionally, Cunha (2017) illustrated that musicking together supported

participants of a music therapy group to experience contrasting feelings, engage in thinking about interpersonal interactions, develop relationships with others and ultimately enact positive change in their lives.

I asked the students what they thought it was about that experience that had contributed to the shifting mood, with varied students responding that “everyone was joining in”, “we were all in unison... like the same all together, as one”, “no one laughed at anyone; anyone who wanted to dance can”. One student pointed out that the lyrics were a contributor to the shift; Justine agreeing that:

...well you look around, we’ve all come from different places, haven’t we? You know we weren’t all born in Australia, we didn’t all start off in [*name of suburb withheld*]? But we’ve all come together, we’ve found ourselves together here in 5C, and we work together as one.

The analysis of song lyrics has long been a part of traditional music therapy work with young people (McFerran & Wigram, 2010). Justine appeared to have the skills to do this naturally to reinforce the students’ sense of classroom belonging.

Scrine (2016) critiques the ways in which highlighting the seemingly universal quality of music in promoting connection can serve to ignore discussion of oppression also implicit within music. Retrospectively, I also lamented the fact that, given our initial aim of exploring healthy emotional expression for students regardless of their identifying gender, I didn’t initiate further exploration of the gendered narratives present in students’ playlist songs. Nonetheless, while we had originally intended for students to create their own personalised playlists to learn about emotions, I was beginning to realise that working in the classroom context was allowing some of the other affordances of group musical engagements to come to the fore. More importantly, I was starting to commit to encouraging teachers to set their own agenda for student learning within this professional learning program.

Supporting Justine to build on her existing classroom musical practices.

Justine's growing in confidence at being with her students musically.

Over the next few weeks, we followed the same general pattern while exploring music for different emotions. Throughout this process, Justine and I continued to liaise within each session to tweak our plans depending on how the students seemed at that moment. I encouraged Justine to take ownership for more and more of the session each time. When I returned to the school after an absence, I was thrilled to hear that Justine had continued the activity without me. At a professional learning community meeting later in the term, Justine told her peers that what was helpful for her was “Just getting into the habit I think; just getting into the habit of doing it. Once you do it then it becomes, make it part of your routine kind of thing.” I felt uncertain about this response, as not all of the participating teachers seemed to be able to get into the habit of leading musical engagements without me. I pondered whether it was partly the simple and repetitious nature of the musical engagement we had planned, and partly Justine's own enthusiasm, that enabled her to continue to lead her students in the playlist creation, even on a day I wasn't present. I was reminded of the way in which Bolger and McFerran (2013) illustrated intentionally leaving the room or not turning up to promote group members' ownership of music activities when working in a community music therapy program in an international context.

The ripple effect of sharing the 'happy song' process at staff meeting.

When reflecting on an unsuccessful externally-provided school music education program, Grimmett, Rickard, Gill, and Fintan (2010) suggest the necessity of taking proactive steps to change the values about music education of staff across the school in the hope of resulting in long-term sustained outcomes. Indeed, striving for sustainability through embedding music in the school community is a key tenet of Rickson and McFerran's (2014) process for creating flourishing school musical cultures. Providing Justine with the

opportunity to describe the ‘happy song’ process at a whole-staff professional learning meeting turned out to be an extremely effective means of beginning to shape this cultural shift. Sharing with colleagues also aligned with the national standards of teacher practice for Highly Accomplished Teachers such as Justine, in which teachers are expected to develop their ability to support colleagues with addressing diverse student needs (AITSL, 2017)

Pavlicevic and Andsell (2004) propose “the ripple effect” (2004, p. 15), in which the impact of music therapy work can span outwards to new people and places, creating community in the process. I made a conscious effort at the end of the staff meeting presentation to encourage the wider staff to consider what they could bring back to their own classroom practice. Over the weeks that followed, I heard several conversations about the use of ‘happy songs’ rippling in classrooms across the school. While the other teachers weren’t engaging students in the same depth of learning as Justine had done, several had begun to use student-preferred music to break up the day and promote a positive classroom climate. This had an encouraging impact on Justine, who told me at the end of the program:

Oh, I've really enjoyed listening to what the others are doing and today I had a little chuckle when, um, we were in the staff room and you came over to speak to Liz [*another teacher in the professional learning program*] and I heard you say “and then we can just have a ‘happy song’”, and I thought oh, ok, so um I guess sharing what I've been doing and knowing that the others are implementing that in their classrooms as well, it's kind of like, you know that makes me feel good.

I began that to consider that actively collaborating with experienced teachers such as Justine to address their professional obligation of supporting and influencing the practice of their colleagues (AITSL, 2017) could be a fundamental means of promoting sustained practices and benefits from my time at the school. Furthermore, when referring to the way she had shared the ‘happy song’ activity to her peers in an email after the program had ended,

Justine wrote “*Perhaps I’ve convinced others that letting your hair down for a couple of minutes in a day/week is not only therapeutic for the students but for us teachers too*”. It seemed to me that supporting teachers to build their ability to use music in a way that could contribute to students and staff members feeling good together in the classroom was a worthwhile aim for my time in the school.

In the final week of the program, I closed my work in Justine’s classroom with one last ‘happy song’ version of “Different People (Come Together)” (Bromley et al., 2012). For the first time Justine responded to her students’ pleas to join her in the circle in a poignant act that appeared to blur the boundaries between teacher and students. I too joined the students and Justine in the circle for this classroom performance. I wondered what it was that had made Justine change her mind, given that I had decided to respect the boundaries she had set with her students. I later questioned whether I had performed the role of supportive outsider with Justine, reminding her of alternative possibilities for being with her students in relational ways.

McFerran et al. (2015) write of the ways in which music can be used in relationships between teacher and students rather than simply being used as a learning tool. It appeared that over the course of the professional learning program, there had been a deepening of the teacher-student relationships in this classroom. I pondered the possibility that this program had supported Justine to build her capacity for promoting this important classroom protective factor described in the literature (H. Cahill et al., 2014).

Reflection on Justine's appraisal of Music for Classroom Wellbeing Professional Learning.

Ten weeks after we had completed our work together, Justine emailed to tell me that she had begun to put quiet recorded music on in the background when her students were becoming noisy as a strategy to support her to stay calm. She continued by writing:

I guess one of the biggest positives to come from working with you this year is the fact that I think of music as a go-to now. When thinking about student behaviour and their needs, I think about music and how this can help. It certainly beats losing my temper and getting angry. That's a win for my wellbeing and student wellbeing!

While we had begun with the intention to use music to address the identified needs of Justine's students through explicitly teaching them about emotional regulation, it seemed that Justine had potentially built her ability to use music to support her own emotional regulation in the classroom.

In an unpublished evaluation of practice, Roberts (2015) describes consultative music therapy work with kindergarten teachers to support them to use music with their group of students with diverse needs. They contended that the kindergarten teachers who could devise their own musical activities and take ownership over musical activities were able to sustain their practice after six months. Six months after the conclusion of the Music for Classroom Wellbeing Professional Learning Program, Justine appeared to have been able to adapt what we had done with her previous class to support her new class group. She stated that although she had initiated the 'happy song' activity:

the cohort of students is very different to last year and, having begun earlier in the year, much more immature. You've given me the skills and knowledge to take this journey as quickly or slowly as needed. More importantly, I now feel confident to continue the journey on my own.

Indeed, when responding directly to a question about whether she felt any outcomes from the professional learning program had been sustained for her, Justine responded by writing: *“Absolutely: the confidence I gained in myself to let my guard down in front of my students for happy song time. They enjoy seeing me have a sing and dance too.”* I reflected on my work with Justine. I was glad that I had allowed Justine to guide her own shift in practice related to the boundaries she held with her students. Justine had helped me to realise the interrelatedness of both the learning and wellbeing of teachers and students in a classroom. Furthermore, supporting Justine had convinced me that supporting teachers to develop their comfort with being musically with their students could assist them to blur the boundaries between teacher and student, leading to strengthened student-teacher relationships.

The account of Kate.

Getting to know Kate.

Timetable pressures.

Kate approached me straight after the staff meeting presentation and told me she was keen to be involved. She mentioned that while she already used a lot of vocal chants with her prep class, she loved music and was interested in learning more. I thought that a music session in the morning might be good for the attention span of her prep students so initially suggested that we could timetable her class for the start of the day. However, this was vetoed when Kate let me know that she needed to deliver a new literacy program and it couldn't be interrupted. I was familiar with this program from my previous experience working in schools, and knew that it incorporated the use of songs as students learn to discriminate between and learn the sounds of letters and combinations (2017). While I felt it would be straightforward to align the Music for Classroom Wellbeing Professional Learning Program

with students' phonics learning, I wanted to support Kate's wishes so kept this thought to myself.

Once inside Kate's classroom, a glance at her curriculum planner on the wall revealed a crowded schedule, mostly filled up with literacy and numeracy blocks with a couple of timeslots for religious studies. I also noticed that the timetable contained two inquiry sessions, in which I suspected Kate taught content from other subject areas such as science and the humanities. Hattie and Yates (2013) describes the ways in which rushing learning can lead to students building isolated knowledge (p. 41). I was doubtful about the student learning outcomes that could result from only two short inquiry sessions a week. I considered that in order to support Kate to fit music into her busy schedule it might be helpful to encourage her to integrate musical activities with curriculum material from other subject areas. As well as being expected as part of the delivery of the state curriculum framework (VCAA, 2016), curriculum and content integration is becoming increasingly common practice within the arts. There are a number of educational authors who write about the benefits, processes and practices of teaching other curricular content with and through the arts (Gibson & Ewing, 2011; Lemon & Garvis, 2013; Ludwig et al., 2014; Robinson, 2013; Roy, Baker, & Hamilton, 2015). Gibson and Ewing (2011) argue that embedding arts activities across the everyday curriculum supports deep and creative student learning (p. 4). Furthermore, Hartle, Pinciotti, and Gorton (2015) explore the role of arts integration in meeting the diverse needs of contemporary students. Indeed, building teachers' capacity for arts integration was one of the possible sustained outcomes of externally provided school arts programs identified in the early stages of the BuSTA research project within which I began my PhD studies (McFerran, Crooke, & Hattie, 2017). However, albeit in a New Zealand context, Webb (2016) reports that staff members require significant support in order to be able to confidently deliver curriculum in an integrated manner.

Kate's pre-existing use of music to support student learning.

During my first observation of Kate's teaching practice, I looked on as Kate encouraged students to join in several songs while watching an online video about the alphabet. Later in the session I also saw Kate demonstrate a couple of simple a cappella chants to reinforce her instructions to students (telling me that she believed that using chants helped the students' memory). Kate sang along, and it appeared that she was really enjoying herself. There is some evidence that prolonged engagement with music activities in the early years of life can contribute to the development of literacy skills through improved aural perception and memory (Hallam, 2016). But, while it was once common practice for teachers of early years' students to sing in the classroom, this is no longer the norm. One participant of a focus group discussion that explored school music provision expressed that as current primary school teachers don't receive extensive music training as part of their university courses, they tend not to sing in the classroom (McFerran, 2011). Collins (2016) concurs, reporting that music education classes for pre-service primary school teachers take place over a mere four to 17 hours. I wonder whether this was the case when Kate studied over 15 years ago, or whether she developed her confidence to sing in the classroom through another means? It was clear from this short observation that Kate was also using music in her classroom to support her students' learning. I started to question whether it was only the teachers who were already doing some form of music in their classroom who wanted to be involved in this professional learning program.

A resource-oriented approach to getting to know teachers.

The following week Kate and I met for her assessment conversation. While Kate professed that she felt tired, she also told me that she tries to be bright with her students, and that she loves teaching literacy. Although I was aiming to promote student wellbeing over academic development through this professional learning program, I noted this interest as a

potential resource. In her seminal work in the field of adult mental health, Rolvsjord (2010) offers that a resource-oriented approach to music therapy is characterised by nurturing the strengths and resources of individuals in their context (p.74). This takes place through a collaborative process in which music is also viewed as a potential resource. In community music therapy practice more generally, taking a resource-oriented approach has been described as seeking to build on the resources held by others when collaborating to create their own change and growth (Stige & Aarø, 2011, p. 21). In this context, the word resources can refer to a person's strengths and interests, as well as other more tangible aspects of their experience such as supportive materials, members of their social community or even the music they use in their everyday life. In a literature review of music therapy school consultation, Rickson (2010a) alludes to a "teacher-centred" (p. 75) approach to consultative processes, and shares that one previous author called for a "strengths-based approach" (p. 69) when working with teachers. In spite of this, as noted previously in the Chapter Three Critical Interpretive Synthesis, the centrality of teacher resources is not often discussed in school-based music therapy work. Instead, previous authors have appeared to focus on addressing student needs.

However, some authors describe similar resource-oriented approaches when working with teachers in the context of professional learning programs. For example, when aiming for whole school improvement outcomes, P. Hall and Simeral (2008) describe the process of identifying teacher strengths and then working to build capacity. Waters and White (2015) also outline a whole-school improvement initiative. This program involved providing training to staff about the identification of personal strengths through positive psychology methods so they could, in turn, teach these to their students. Notwithstanding these efforts, however, I recognised that in both the music therapist teacher support and the teacher professional learning literature, identifying teacher resources still tended to be viewed as a precursor to

showing evidence of student outcomes, rather than deserving of a focus in and of itself. With a personal belief that any change to teacher practice would ultimately have a flow-on effect for students, I committed to foregrounding the act of identifying teacher resources as I continued through this professional learning program. Hence, I took the opportunity to explain to Kate that we could build on her love of teaching literacy:

Meg: Yeah cool. That's good to keep in mind, because sometimes I think when we're thinking about professional learning we can frame it from that, I 'spose, deficit frame...

Kate: Yep.

Meg: ...of where we're thinking, oh, this is an area that I really need to improve on, or we can also flip it around and think, ok well, what is bringing me joy, and what is promoting my wellbeing in the classroom? And we can tweak from there as well.

Kate: Sure.

Meg: So it's good to know that literacy is a...

Kate: Love! / Meg: ... love of yours... [*Both laugh*].

Finding out about Kate's musical background also gave me an understanding of her interests and strengths. She told me about growing up in a richly musical family, having keyboard lessons for a short time in high school, and how she loved listening to a range of different music but tended to focus on the melody over the lyrics. When I heard this, I suspected that the simple and repetitive chants she already used in the classroom were far from the type of music that that Kate personally enjoyed listening to. Kate mentioned that she had recently borrowed a keyboard from her parents, explaining that "every day I would play - I'd love to have a piano at home". While she told me that she hadn't used keyboard in her classroom as she "can't just play. I'd have to learn it a bit", Kate stated excitedly that this was something she would "totally" be interested in.

Preparing to use music to support student learning.

Tying in with curriculum guidelines.

Once we had talked about Kate's personal resources, we began to focus our attention on identifying needs of her students. One challenge associated with previous music therapy school consultation programs, noted in Chapter Three, has been that music therapists have tended to frame goals in therapeutic terms, without reference to a specific curriculum framework. This is problematic as, due to the crowded curriculum previously mentioned, teachers find it extremely difficult to include educational content that does not specifically relate to curriculum guidelines. These challenges are consistent with other educational music programs delivered by external providers. When evaluating an externally provided classroom music program, Corcoran (2016) reports that "explicating the relationship between teaching, learning and assessment would assist in formalizing the standing of the MITC [music in the classroom] program as an academic program with social and community benefits" (p. 12). Hence, I sought to tie in with curriculum guidelines within this professional learning program as I felt it might potentially support teachers to attribute class time to musical engagements.

While the new Victorian curriculum does include a social emotional learning component through the Personal and Social Capability (Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority, 2016), the teachers at this school didn't seem to be familiar with this aspect of the curriculum. However, Hardy (2016) explains that in the current Australian context of curriculum reform, teachers require supported conversations in order to be able to implement new curriculum guidelines. Knowledge of this literature supported my decision to align this program with the guidelines for the Personal and Social Capability and consider that perhaps I could be the one to talk to teachers about how to apply this aspect of curriculum.

I asked Kate about which aspect of these curriculum guidelines she would like to initially focus on with her students. This was an important step, as it ensured that Kate realised that while this program could tie in with the literacy curriculum guidelines, the specific student skills being targeted were related to her appraisal of their wellbeing. Kate identified that a starting point would be teaching students to recognise and name their emotions, stating that:

...some kids just can't, they don't know how they're feeling. And even myself, that's something I still struggle with so I think, yeah, helping kids to be expressive with their emotions and what they're feeling and naming their emotions.

Providing Kate with examples of what we could do together.

When working collaboratively with clients in a community music therapy framework, it is acknowledged that the music therapist also brings existing resources and expertise to the partnership (Bolger, 2015). One early stage of the process for creating musical school cultures described by Rickson and McFerran includes “providing examples and experimenting with what we can do” (2014, p. 43). This activity allows music therapists to demonstrate to willing school staff the kinds of musical activities that might be possible.

Even though I was conscious that Kate wanted to work on her ability to play the keyboard, the next time I went to her classroom I took my guitar along. When I arrived Kate was busy helping students to write sentences beginning with the phrase *I have* related to an item from home that was sitting on the desk in front of them. A couple of minutes after my arrival Kate instructed the students to leave their writing where it was and come and sit at the mat. I noticed that the students were writing a sentence beginning with *I have*, and decided to change the lyrics of the Friend Song I was about to sing from “I’ve got” to “I have” to align with the writing activity. Next I announced to Kate and the class that I had noticed that they had been writing a sentence starting with *I have*. Kate asked in a surprised voice, “Is your

song going to be *I have*?” I responded “it’s going to be slightly changed so it says *I have*” demonstrating my ability to flexibly adapt the musical activity based on the context of the classroom; a key element of music therapy practice (B. L. Wheeler, 2015, p. 272).

I then sang “The Friend Song” that I had written many years earlier for another classroom context, showing Kate an example of how it could be possible to connect the students’ writing activity with lyrical content about social skills into a song. This activity also illustrated the possibility of integrating curriculum content from literacy with the Personal and Social Capability curriculum framework through song. F. Baker (2015) explains the ways in which repetitive, predictable and highly structured outcome-oriented songs may be crafted in music therapy to assist clients in recalling desirable behaviours (p. 170). Re-watching the video footage of this example I noticed how much musical expertise I subconsciously pooled into this performance. I used repetition of chord patterns and a simple melody, familiar harmonic structures, extending cadences and shifting tempos to support the young students to be able to join in with singing and actions. I also used deliberately repetitive lyrics with a key word placed at the end of each phrase to help students to be able to sing along, as well as reinforce curriculum content. While I was conscious I didn’t want to overwhelm Kate with the complexity of my musical skills, I similarly wanted to show her that it was possible to write a song for the classroom and use an accompanying instrument in this way. Kate had told me that she wanted to work on her ability to incorporate the voices of her students into assessment processes through her participation in the professional learning program. Therefore, I also ensured that I asked students to contribute their own voices to lyrics. I assumed that the students were extremely engaged, due to their facial expressions, attention and involvement in singing and actions.

Taking charge with planning.

Sharing my expertise with Kate continued as we moved into the program planning stage of our work together. Before the school holidays I met up with Kate and her colleague Liz, another prep teacher who was also participating in the professional learning program. While I had hoped we would sit down together and make a thorough plan for our work together over the next term, it was clear that the teachers were under too much pressure to complete their literacy and numeracy planning to spend more than ten minutes with me. I wasn't surprised by this, as curriculum content other than the core subjects of mathematics, science and literature are often pushed off the agenda due to the neoliberal constraints of 21st century schooling (Proctor, Brownlee, & Freebody, 2015). As such, the significant time restrictions on our planning time meant I decided to be quite directive. Based on what I had previously learned about Kate and her students, I suggested that adapting the popular children's song "If you're happy and you know it" and singing it with the students might be a starting point for our work. Kate said, "Sounds good", but looked distracted and unsure. I continued, stating to Kate that she might like to play the keyboard along with the song, to which she responded, "I don't know about that straight away".

I went away pondering how I should proceed given Kate's seeming ambivalence, however my instincts told me that Kate seemed hesitant as she was overwhelmed from her workload rather than believing that she didn't like my ideas. I speculated that our work together would benefit from me helping her with the initial planning, and knew that it was common practice for instructional coaches to assist teachers by providing resources (P. Hall & Simeral, 2008, p. 37). I was critical of the common practice in teacher professional learning program of supplying all teachers with 'one-size-fits-all' resources reported in the literature (Mockler, 2013). As such I drew on my in-depth knowledge of Kate and her classroom to create a beginning template for musical activities for a Music for Wellbeing

Unit and shared it with Kate through an online file-sharing platform. I then followed this up with a short email reading “*PS – If you get inspired I have uploaded the piano music for if you’re happy and you know it into your folder as well :)*”. I was delighted to receive Kate’s enthusiastic email responding, “*Thanks will steal the keyboard back from my parents and give it a go!*”

Supporting Kate to play keyboard in the classroom.

A shaky start.

When I arrived back to Kate’s classroom the following term, I could see that she had borrowed a keyboard from the school music room and had students seated on the carpet, ready for the session. While Kate told me she had practised playing the tune of “If you’re happy and you know it” over the holidays, she seemed nervous to play it in front of the students and myself. We began singing the adapted version of the song together with the students, myself accompanying with a chordal pattern on guitar and Kate playing the one-finger melody on the keyboard. While the students seemed absorbed, Kate stumbled over the right-hand keyboard melody, her head bowed to read the sheet music. I once again reflected on the complexity of playing a simple song in the classroom context; not only did Kate need the ability to physically play the notes, but also simultaneously hold the complex task of teaching 17 students while altering the tempo of the music to allow the students time to respond.

I realised that it was no surprise that Rickson and Twyford (2011) discussed the challenge within music therapy consultation of supporting teachers to use music with their whole class group. I instinctively put down my guitar in an attempt to demonstrate that it didn’t matter if we had live music or simply chanted a cappella. A couple of minutes later, as we shifted to singing the lyrics about feeling sad, Kate stopped playing the keyboard which allowed her to raise her head and hold eye contact with her students as we sang.

I later wrote in my field notes “*it seems that Kate is super nervous to play the keyboard*”. While she had told me that she wanted to develop the ability to play it in her classroom, it seemed that Kate was putting pressure on herself to get it ‘right’. At the end of the program, Kate confirmed my suspicion, stating that:

...well at first I was quite, not very confident about bringing the music in I think like when I was doing it with you and trying to play the keyboard and worrying about playing the right notes and things.

A lack of confidence is regularly cited as one of the main barriers to teachers’ use of live music in their everyday classroom, particularly within the current school climate (Bates, 2016). Critical scholar Bates proposes that music education is all too often perceived as an activity for the limited schools who have the most resources, as opposed to being open to participation by all. Bates further argues that classroom teachers are best placed to integrate music into their everyday teaching, yet “musical helplessness” (p. 19) is commonly experienced. Interestingly, this is not only the case when teachers are encouraged out of their comfort zone through playing music, but also other artistic pursuits. In a teacher professional learning writing workshop, Yoo and Carter (2017) discuss the ways in which teachers felt vulnerable when engaging in creative writing activities without a preconceived “right” answer, although this allowed them insight into the experience of learning for their students. The authors continued that, within their study, positioning teachers as learners themselves created the space needed for them to feel comfortable and open to experiment with the writing as a process. In the music therapy sphere, Rickson (2010a) shared that when working with staff members, “developing their musical identity, regaining or developing musical confidence and/or refining music skill so they can use music freely with students” (p. 60) was a crucial part of the consultation practice. I emailed Kate to propose that we could set up a weekly time slot so we could spend ten minutes practising together. I hoped that engaging

with Kate in solo piano lessons would assist her to relax into the music making with her students.

Building resilience with song.

I also mentioned in my email that it was up to Kate how she wanted to plan for subsequent sessions. I was therefore thrilled to receive a lengthy plan by email from Kate before our next session. Kate explained that the previous week the school had hosted an incursion performance which focused on developing student resilience. The performance featured the catch phrase “Never give up, encourage others and do your best” (KIDZ, 2013), and Kate had designed a plan incorporating literacy activities and a song to tie in with these concepts. I was impressed with the initiative Kate took in sending this through and the way she hoped to integrate curriculum from both the Personal and Social Capability and English curriculum guidelines using song. I also felt that, while I had supported her to get started with planning, the balance had shifted and now she was taking ownership for the sessions.

When I arrived at the classroom the next week, students were finishing writing their sentence beginning with *I want to* and ending by stating a personal goal. Kate seemed a little flustered, so I reassured her that it didn’t matter what happened, and that we would have a go at making up a song together, “no pressure”.

We then moved to the carpet, seated students in a circle and proceeded to make up “The NED Song” together based on Kate’s plan. Kate had borrowed the keyboard but told me she hadn’t practised it, so I volunteered to show her, improvising a simple melody to accompany the words of the song. I guided Kate to move around the circle to allow each student to state their personal goal, as we sang the following lyrics:

What do you want? (*Student responds by stating ‘I want...’*)

Well, never give up, encourage each other, do your best!

I think I can, I think I can, I think I can, I think I can!

Later in the day Kate told me that as the teacher she was feeling quite overwhelmed. We spoke for quite a while, during which Kate divulged that she wasn't even sure whether she would be at the school the following year. She sounded burnt out, and although I tried not to show it, this affected me emotionally as I personally related to Kate's experience. Like Berger (2015), I considered how much to share about my personal experience when conducting a research project, and ultimately chose not to tell Kate about my own similar challenges. Van Droogenbroeck et al. (2014) describe the common occurrence of experienced teachers leaving the profession due to the impact of increasing non-teaching workload requirements and relentless interpersonal relationships with students, colleagues and parents. I couldn't help but feel bitter about what a loss it would be if one of the best teachers I had ever observed left the profession. I was thankful that I hadn't added to the likely pressure Kate was experiencing by reassuring her that it didn't matter what our song sounded like. However, I also wondered what I could do to support Kate (and other teachers) to stay in the profession?

Jamming in the classroom.

Later that day I met up with Kate for our first short keyboard lesson. I suggested to Kate that it could be useful for her to learn to play chords on the keyboard. I explained that this could assist her to accompany herself while singing simple songs without needing to read sheet music and would allow her to keep her eyes on the students. While I attempted to show her the most commonly used chord progression in the key of C on the keyboard, I didn't explain it very clearly, and as I left I could see that Kate was confused. Although providing musical instruction is described as an appropriate component of music therapy should the client desire it (Rolvsjord, 2010, p. 210), this is not something that I had much experience in. I initially sent Kate a copy of the songs we had been working on in the classroom with

accompanying chords in the key of C. However, these did not inspire Kate to practise. I later reminded myself of Kate's preferred music and sourced a document containing the lyrics and chords in the key of C to a song called "Helplessness Blues" (2011) by one of Kate's favourite bands. I hoped that learning how to play piano for this personally preferred music would be more motivating for Kate.

The following week Kate and I seized ten minutes to practise this song together, heading to the classroom while the students were engaged in a computer science lesson with a specialist teacher. As we played the song – Kate on keyboard and myself on guitar – it was obvious that she had practised the chords. I suspected that working on a song that Kate loved had supported her to engage in practising. She told me it was a bit high for her vocal range, so using the keyboard I showed her how to then transpose down to the key of G and made plans to send her through an updated chord and lyric chart. Her students came back in while we were still singing. Kate kept going as they quietly took their seats and started eating lunch. I felt that something had shifted in our work together. Although Kate had told me that she tended not to notice the lyrics of songs, I couldn't help but wonder whether singing the "helplessness blues" together had supported Kate to express her feelings of overwhelm, even in a non-verbal way? Medcalf (2016) proposes that musicking with others within music therapy has the potential for transcending traditional professional boundaries towards intimate encounters. I definitely felt that Kate and I were jamming rather than having a traditional keyboard lesson.

Two weeks later we had the opportunity to jam with this song again as students ate their lunch. Kate's singing voice was stronger this time, so I shifted from singing in unison with her to harmonising during the chorus. Kate played along in the new key proficiently, with short pauses every now and then. I noted "*Sounded and felt nice to musick together in*

the classroom, as though time had stood still for just a moment". While this seemed significant to me, I wondered what this really meant, if anything, to Kate?

I also noted with pride that when Kate had played the keyboard along to "The NED song" that day, she was able to do so while looking at the students, singing melodically and accompanying by playing a chord in her right hand with no errors. I speculated that perhaps learning a song of her own preference had afforded this development in musicality while teaching.

At our final interview Kate expressed the way she had enjoyed extending her skills to be able to move from using chants in the classroom to writing songs, sharing that "and just gaining that confidence and just using the chords and stuff, that's been really helpful". Kate added that "just making it up" on keyboard was also a valuable part of her developing practice. It seemed that in developing her confidence Kate had also let go of the need to always play the "right" notes when singing with her students.

Classroom keyboard to piano lessons.

Kate and I finished up our work together at the end of the very last day I spent at the school. I presented her with a folder of lyrics and chords to songs by artists I knew she liked and showed her how she could search for these herself on the internet. We chose one final song to jam on, and I taught Kate how to work out the chords she needed, reminding her that there were other teachers on staff who could help her with this in my absence.

When we completed the song, Kate told me "I love it", and I reinforced that accompanying songs on keyboard with chords could be something that she could do much more instantly than learning to read the notes. As I finished explaining this, Kate said excitedly, "I actually had a piano lesson last night!" She went on to tell me that when she had arrived at her sister's house for dinner, her niece and nephew had just finished up their piano lesson. She shared that her sister knew that she wanted to learn and had organised for the

piano teacher to offer Kate her own lesson. Kate hesitantly agreed, had her first lesson and arranged to continue with the teacher each fortnight into the future.

Reflection on Kate's appraisal of the Music for Classroom Wellbeing Professional Learning Program.

When I returned to the school five weeks later, Kate described the way she was still using the keyboard to sing with the students a few times a week. She mentioned that as well as feeling excited to do it herself, she believed that integrating songs with the students' writing had assisted those students who "find it hard orally to express themselves and to convert that to their writing". This had allowed them to experience success, a key protective factor for student wellbeing and resilience (H. Cahill et al., 2014). Comber (2011) shares the need for evolving understandings of what constitutes literacy beyond the limited scope of standardised testing requirements to meet student needs in culturally diverse contemporary classrooms. It seemed that Kate had built her capacity for delivering literacy in a manner that suited the needs of her cohort of students, alongside creatively teaching Personal and Social curriculum content. Kate also shared that sometimes, when an issue arose related to students' emotional expression or resilience, she and her students spontaneously broke into one of the songs we had used during the program.

Moreover, perhaps the most significant finding conveyed by Kate in the context of the current educational climate was that singing contributed to her own personal wellbeing as it simply helped her feel good:

I think developing that confidence with music to have a go, um, what else, just in general with wellbeing and how music can help your wellbeing I think, kids and myself, like I find sometimes, just by you know doing the chants and stuff like we did for writing yesterday puts me in a good mood sometimes as well... it's just like stop

and take that time and yeah it makes me feel good yeah to do it and to see the kids enjoy it is really good.

When studying the developing musical identity of four music educators, Pellegrino (2015) outlined the manner in which participants' personal wellbeing intersected with their music making, and noted that at times classroom musical activities became a mood enhancer. Yoo and Carter (2017) propose that teachers who are supported through professional learning to feel positive emotions in the classroom are well positioned to remain engaged in the profession. Zwart, Korthagen, and Attema-Noordewier (2015) take a more critical stance and call for strengths-based professional learning to help combat the high rates of teacher burnout and support teachers to find "flow" in the classroom (p. 593). I wondered whether continuing to engage in classroom music making would assist Kate in maintaining her enthusiasm for teaching?

When I returned the following year to interview Kate, she lamented the fact that so far with her new prep students she had only continued to use "music as a way for kids to learn" rather than strengthening student wellbeing. Kate went on to explain that she hadn't felt able to extend on the knowledge she had developed within the professional learning program due to time pressures and the fact that her prep students had just begun school. I recalled the words of other music therapy scholars who have written about the necessity for ongoing regular support after music therapy teacher support programs have ceased (Bolger & McFerran, 2013; Coombes, 2011; Coombes & Tombs-Katz, 2009; McFerran et al., 2015; Rickson, 2012). I considered that future programs would benefit from including intermittent follow up conversations and emails so that teachers may be both encouraged to continue to use practices learned, as well as be reassured when this was not possible.

In spite of this news however, I was delighted to hear that Kate was continuing with fortnightly private piano lessons. Furthermore, she had sought support with learning another

preferred piano piece from Kafka, another teacher participant of the professional learning program. Owen (2016) shares the shift in well-developed professional learning communities from teachers viewing classroom practice as an individual role to engaging in more collegiate practices. This can in turn contribute towards greater teacher wellbeing and “flourishing” (p. 406). The small act of asking Kafka for help with the keyboard demonstrated to me that Kate was drawing on the resources of others to continue to enrich her musicality.

When asked about the program itself, Kate described that it was “Professional learning, but also personal as well”. She also mentioned that:

I really loved it because it got me to do a bit of singing, which I love, and to play the piano again... that’s amazing because that’s something I’ve wanted to do for a long time and I just haven’t sort of done it.

Again I reflected on the potential of music that began in the context of community music therapy practice rippling outwards into everyday life (Pavlicevic & Andsell, 2004, p. 15). While I was confident that piano lessons would contribute to Kate’s own personal wellbeing, enjoyment and musicality, I also suspected that they would continue to enhance her ability to leverage the affordances of music in the classroom.

Chapter conclusion.

Through the practice of supporting Justine and Kate to enrich their musicality within this program, a number of important realisations were made. Notably, through their own enriched musicality teachers built their confidence at leveraging the affordances of music in their classroom. It is reiterated that the phrase “use music” within this thesis refers to the ability to consciously leverage the affordances of music as understood within community music therapy (Stige et al., 2010).

The first major insight gleaned from these accounts was that, when collaborating with these two experienced teachers within this program, building on teachers’ existing classroom

musical practices proved to be an effective method. For Justine, this entailed extending her use of recorded music to address student wellbeing in the classroom. Music therapy authors write of the ways in which using live music with students is effective as it can be adapted to suit the needs of the individuals involved (McFerran et al., 2015). However, reflection on working with Kate also allowed a realisation of the complexity involved in simultaneously striving to leverage the affordances of music while teaching a group of students. Although the act of listening to pre-composed songs is, by contrast, a relatively simple intervention, the account of Justine is demonstrative of the ways in which using recorded music in the classroom can also be a powerful way to meet the capabilities of the teacher in question.

Furthermore, using a resource-oriented approach when partnering with Kate led to the realisation that it would be more motivating for Kate to learn how to play chords on the keyboard by playing and singing her own preferred songs, rather than practicing songs to play for her students. This insight ultimately contributed towards Kate reconnecting with her own musicality and beginning private music lessons.

Within this professional learning program, learning to use music to address the identified wellbeing needs of the students within this program fostered teachers' ability to shift the classroom climate and contributed to the teachers feeling better in the classroom. Thus, it was extrapolated that supporting Justine and Kate to use music had contributed towards classroom wellbeing – the wellbeing of both students and teachers.

In a recent exploration into preschool teachers' perspectives on classroom climate, (Shewark, Zinsser, & Denham, 2018) discuss the stress involved in teachers striving to regulate both their own and students' emotions in the classroom. The authors further illustrate the necessity of providing teachers with clear guidance about how they can manage the climate of the classroom and as well as their personal emotional wellbeing. The accounts of Justine and Kate suggest that partnering with teachers in a collaborative and resource-

oriented Music for Classroom Wellbeing Professional Learning Program may provide teachers with this much-needed assistance.

Chapter Seven: Supporting Liz, Kafka and Jen to Develop Teaching Practices

Chapter introduction.

This chapter presents two ethnographic accounts of early career teachers Kafka, Liz and Jen. As previously outlined, the practice of supporting Kafka and Liz has been combined into a single account. Both of the accounts presented in this chapter illustrate the domain of teacher growth pertaining to the ways in which teachers were supported to develop teaching practices within this professional learning program. Within this thesis, the phrase “teaching practices” is used to refer to any practices used by a teacher intended to promote the education of students. This phrase was chosen instead of the word “pedagogies” to provide clarity for a music therapist audience.

The account of Kafka and Liz was constructed to illustrate the particular challenges faced by early career teachers seeking to develop their teacher identity, and the role of supportive and classroom-based professional learning from an external provider in supporting teachers’ developing teaching practices. The account of Jen depicts the impact of the performative pressures faced by teachers on their classroom practices. The reflexive and activist elements of a community music therapy informed approach to teacher professional learning are also elucidated.

The account of Liz and Kafka.

Getting to know Liz and Kafka.

The following section includes an account of Music for Classroom Wellbeing Professional Learning with two early career teachers who volunteered for the professional learning program; Liz and Kafka. While the program evolved uniquely for each of them, I decided to include their experiences together to explore parallels in the processes of supporting early career staff members.

Initial impressions.

Authors have written about the ways in which a major task early in teachers' careers is the development of their personal teacher identity (van der Want et al., 2015). I therefore realised that working to support Liz and Kafka would look different to the other more experienced teachers. Indeed, this concept is reflected in the national teacher professional learning standards (AITSL, 2017) which is separated into four career stages. As experienced teachers, the focus of professional learning for Justine and Kate would be inherently different to Liz and Kafka in the early years of their teaching career.

It was evident from the first time I spent in Liz's prep classroom that she was still developing her teaching practice. On my initial observation, Liz was leading a small group of students in a literacy activity, with the other students working independently in small groups on different tasks. While the space looked highly organised and felt calm, I questioned the depth of student learning as I noticed that the students working without Liz's support were talking among themselves rather than engaging in the set learning task. I also noticed that the learning materials were photocopied worksheets and did not appear to have been adjusted to suit the students. One of the key tenets of inclusive educational practices relates to the role of the teacher in modifying the delivery of content to suit the needs of all students (UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, 2016). However, while Australian teachers are obliged to engage in inclusive practices, the reality is that many teachers feel unprepared to enact this in their classrooms (Dally et al., 2019). When observing Liz teach, I reflected on the enormous challenge involved in delivering learning activities that were differentiated to meet the needs of all students simultaneously.

A little later in the session Liz called the students to sit on the carpet and eat their fruit for morning tea. Liz put a YouTube video clip of a song about letters on the interactive whiteboard for the students to watch while they ate, telling me "I like to put this on as it

reinforces the letter sounds”. It seemed awkward to me that neither Liz nor her students sang along to the video, though the students appeared transfixed to the screen as they munched away silently. Using recorded music in the classroom has been described as a means of engaging students in their learning by several music therapists (Cheong-Clinch, 2009; McFerran, Crooke, & Bolger, 2017). However, I was reminded of the finding by McFerran, Crooke, and Bolger (2017) that students appeared more engaged when their teacher was joining in with the recording.

I noted after the session: *“I must admit I feel a bit bored when I arrived in here”* as there was little evidence of creativity or fun in the activities I witnessed. While the students were compliant, I wasn’t convinced that they were absorbed in their learning. Craft (2012) illustrates the ways in which incorporating creativity into contemporary education provision can challenge the status quo and support teachers to consider new ways of working. I also wrote *“I must admit to being less enthusiastic about working with this teacher”*, and took some time reflecting on what it was that had put me off. I realised that in comparison to the practice of more experienced teachers that I had observed, Liz - a teacher with only two years’ experience and working with preps for the first time - seemed to be lacking in self-confidence. Rodriguez and Magill (2016) expose the impact of neoliberal agendas on teacher training courses that seek to equip teachers with “tools” (p. 17) to impact their future students’ achievement on standardised tests, rather than skills to innovatively respond to students. Once I had considered this, I could see that the lack of creative teaching methods I had observed may have been a symptom of her university education rather than a slight on her teaching ability.

I had a similar experience when first observing Kafka’s teaching practice, although for totally different reasons. In comparison to Liz, Kafka was a trained music teacher and gigging musician. The first time I spent a session in his classroom he seemingly self-

assuredly called his grade two students from their tables to sit on the mat by singing an improvised song accompanied by guitar. Yet, while there was evidence of dialogue between Kafka and his students, the atmosphere in the classroom felt charged. I noted: “*the students are very chatty and ratty*” and “*remember Meg the importance of structure*”. It appeared that Kafka’s students were continually testing the boundaries and seeking his reaction. As well as contributing to me feeling irritated, this was also potentially limiting their capacity for deep learning. H. Cahill et al. (2014) identify the use of positive student management strategies in contemporary diverse classrooms as a protective factor towards the development of student wellbeing and resilience. Positive methods of student management typically include incorporating structure and easily understood learning intentions into teaching methods that meet students’ developmental and sensory needs (Simonsen & Sugai, 2013).

When contemplating these first impressions many months later I am not surprised that I felt uncomfortable when I perceived a need for supporting these teachers to develop their teaching practices. For one thing, this aim was outside of the scope of traditional music therapist teacher support programs identified in Chapter Two. Furthermore, I needed to remember that it wasn’t my role to manage Kafka’s students’ behaviour or engage Liz’s students myself. Rather, it was my job to sit back and allow myself to feel uncomfortable so that I could support the teachers to grow.

Early career teachers enthusiastic about learning.

During the assessment conversation Liz explained that a major reason for joining the program was that:

I really think that it [music] can benefit the kids, it can benefit me because there are so many different ways that we learn as people, especially as kids, I want to be able to cater to a wide range of that in my classroom, and also just for myself, my own professional knowledge.

Liz also expressed that she felt that integrating songs into her classroom practice would make the learning fun and less “dry”.

Liz told me that she had enjoyed private singing lessons during her final year of high school, overcoming her shyness to surprise her friends and family by performing a solo song at the end of year concert. However, she explained that she had “regressed” since then and didn’t feel comfortable to sing in front of anyone; not even her previous grade of five and six-year-old students. I knew from previous literature how common it was for everyday classroom teachers to lack confidence at singing in front of others (Barry & Durham, 2017; Lemon & Garvis, 2013; Webb, 2016). I pondered if supporting Liz to sing in the classroom would be an appropriate initial focus for our work and whether this would serve to support her to use engaging classroom practices with her students.

Kafka was similarly open to learning and told me that he wanted support with the way he managed learning activities in the classroom. Strom (2015) discusses the ways in which pre-service teachers within the current neoliberal context of education practice are often ill-prepared for engaging in the complexity of “collaborative negotiations” (p. 330) between themselves, their students and the classroom context in their first year of teaching. Kafka particularly wanted to be able to develop a middle ground with his students between friend and authoritarian:

...not that I’m like struggling but just, I never shout and I want to try other ways to get attention and you know manage the class so I’d really like to give that a go especially cos I’m quite a young teacher just to transition things smoother, to have children more engaged and that would be great to me I think for my own performance and profession.

Halfway into the program Kafka shared his intention to use music to support his student management when speaking in front of his colleagues at the staff meeting

presentation. At end interview, he told me that this was something that the school principal had personally congratulated him for, stating that “the principal said to me he was like "oh' you know Kafka, I really like that goal ...not many people would want to admit they have that goal'"". When evaluating an externally provided school music program that supported teacher growth, Corcoran (2016) relayed the words of a participant who communicated “You’ve got to be somebody that has to be prepared to learn, and that’s not all teachers, prepared to be vulnerable, and it’s definitely not all teachers” (p. 28). This was certainly the case for Liz and Kafka. I was also pleased to note that the very aspect of each teachers’ practice that I had identified as a challenge was what they also noted they wanted to develop. Kafka and Liz’s enthusiasm to engage in continued professional learning and willingness to express their vulnerability spurred me along.

A need for ongoing support with planning.

When I asked the teachers to identify the wellbeing needs of their cohort, both Liz and Kafka seemed readily able to do this and use this knowledge to set an appropriate focus for our work related to the Personal and Social Capability Curriculum Guidelines (Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority, 2016). Liz identified that she wanted to target increasing the resilience of her students, as “they need to learn how to solve their own problems”. Kafka was also quick to tell me that he had been having some issues in the classroom concerning his students’ relationships between each other and wanted to focus on building student social skills. It emerged, however, that while both teachers could independently identify their students’ needs regarding personal and social learning, they weren’t sure how to address these needs within their teaching practice. Indeed, H. Cahill et al. (2014) argues for the importance of providing teachers with ongoing support in order to be able to deliver social emotional learning programs to their students.

As it appeared that Kafka would require support with his program planning, I made some direct suggestions about how we may begin our work. I noted that *I think Kafka will need a debrief and planning timeslot each week to ensure his learning develops* and attempted to initiate this weekly. Bolger (2015) has written of the ways in which part of the collaborative work within community music therapy practice takes place outside of the music making itself through engaging in the life of the community. This was certainly the case for me, with my working day beginning well before the school bell and continuing through recess and lunch break, as these were often the only times I had to converse with teachers. Kafka's weekly classroom-based session proceeded lunchtime, and we formed a habit of catching up to debrief as we ate our lunch afterwards. By contrast, although I endeavoured to meet up with Liz each week during her designated planning time, this rarely eventuated. Furthermore, when it did it was brief and, as it took place with Liz's more experienced colleague Kate, didn't allow for as much support with the challenges of developing teaching practice. At the end of the program Liz shared that she thought it would have been good if she had more time to spend debriefing with me:

Um, maybe having instead of the one day on the Tuesday, 'cos I noticed it was very hard for you to kind of come to every teacher and you know it would have been hard for you as well to make sure to touch base with everybody, maybe to have more time, and other than that, you know and that would have helped maybe plan lessons as well.

I felt frustrated that I hadn't thought of grouping Liz and Kafka together for a weekly lunchtime debrief session, particularly given that by the time I made it to Liz's classroom at the end of the day we were both often exhausted and rarely had the energy for extra planning.

Supporting Liz and Kafka to deepen use of reflexive practices.

Learning to 'use' music.

I settled into weekly sessions in Kafka's room in which he regularly put on his own preferred recorded music while students were eating their lunch or picked up and strummed a guitar. While Kafka appeared to have a friendly relationship with his students, I felt that they often took advantage of his relaxed nature. I also noticed that the musical activities Kafka was using were geared towards teaching musical skills rather than using the affordances of music to work towards students' wellbeing. I recalled a publication about the overlap between the principles of music therapy and education within a school setting (J. Hall, 2012). Hall noted the ways in which, although students' musical skills are not the primary emphasis of music therapy, they are likely to improve through the music therapy process. However, when working to encourage Kafka to shift from a music education lens, I decided that it would be important to move away from any student activities related to the development of musical skill. As Kafka acted extremely confident to initiate musical activities it took a little longer for me to recognise that he wanted me to model some musical activities for him as well.

A couple of weeks into term three we had spent a frustrating classroom session together, with Kafka moving seemingly aimlessly from one musical activity to the next, and the students responding with restlessness and disinterest. When the students' behaviour became really heightened, I made a decision to step in, and asked for Kafka's permission to demonstrate a simple chant to call students back to sit on the carpet. He agreed with what I assumed to be gratitude. I began rhythmically stamping my feet to create a beat and sung a simple chant, adapted from a music therapy workshop I had recently attended. When the students responded by following the instructions within the song, I immediately grabbed my guitar and began singing an upbeat "hello song" I had written years earlier, encouraging the

class to follow instructions within the lyrics to move their bodies in a variety of ways. By the end of song, the whole class seemed calmer and more focused and engaged. Kafka appeared to have understood this process, and giving me a huge grin, agreed to catch up over his lunchbreak.

Richardson, Watt, and Devos (2013) discuss the ways in which early career teachers often require support to cope with the complexity of their role, in particular when learning to manage classroom relationships. Other authors have written of the need to assist new graduate teachers in developing their ability to continually reflect on their practice (Penn-Edwards, Donnison, & Albion, 2016). Indeed, this is a similarly central process within the practice of both community music therapy (Stige & Aarø, 2011) and critical pedagogy (Freire, 1972). To Freire, praxis is the cyclical process of continual action and reflection in which community members reflect critically on their environment and work together towards change through transformative action. Through such a process teachers can “develop teaching practices that are ethical and equitable for all students” (Groundwater-Smith, Mitchell, & Mockler, 2016, p. 87). Music therapist author Procter (2008) describes the “reflexive adaptability” (p.79) required for members of any profession in which they respond to changing context, moment by moment. I committed to supporting these early year teachers to develop their reflexive adaptability.

As I left the classroom, I had the insight that Kafka wasn't being lazy in not providing me with a plan for our sessions, but instead that he didn't know how to create a plan for using music in his teaching. Over lunch I suggested that we could go back to his classroom, reflect on the previous session and create one together in what would become the pivotal session of our work together. As I knew that Kafka wanted to work towards setting clear boundaries for his students, I used my expertise to suggest that it could be helpful if he provided some of the students who were becoming restless with more sensory input. I suggested that using the

structure of the music could give them permission to move during transition times, and drew on the resources of Kafka's extensive musical knowledge to support this process. Derrington (2003) illustrates the affordances of typical song structure to provide a familiar form when working with students in mainstream schools. I therefore asked Kafka to reflect on what I had done musically during the songs I had sung and played earlier. In this way, I drew on my knowledge of information pertaining to song creation in music therapy (F. Baker, 2015, p. 141) to help him identify key components of the song that were supportive of the students' behaviour, using our shared musical language to break down what I had done. With some prompting, Kafka identified that the students were engaged by my open body language and confident and explicit delivery of instructions through the lyrics of each song. We further teased out aspects of the lyrics and the way they were delivered, with Kafka noticing that they were simple, clear and repetitive. Kafka was able to see that the melody I used had a small range in the students' register and was simple yet reminiscent of popular music. I then prompted him further to identify the way I had used rhythm and harmony to guide the students' behaviour, using extended cadences to prepare students for a change or an ending.

Kafka and I then used these same principles to write our own simple chant. Pellegrino (2015) contends that teachers creating their own music for the classroom may use this as an effective management strategy. I felt that I too was growing at combining my professional expertise as a music therapist. I decided to keep the momentum going and stay after the lunch break to join with Kafka in leading the chant with his students. We began by singling out two of the students who had been the most disruptive earlier in the day and asking them to play a hip hop drum beat by banging their pen on the table. We then lead the chant together to this rhythm, calling the students to line up at the door:

Pack up what you're doing! (x4)

Line up at the door! (x4)

You've lined up at the door,

Great job everyone!

The students followed the instructions given through the chant, and then Kafka improvised a similar chant to get them to sit back down. Not only was this simple and engaging for the students, Kafka had used preventative strategies to give attention to those students who most needed it attention as well as deliver a fun multisensory activity during a time of transition. At the end of the program Kafka reflected that:

I think when we first started then I was, 'cos I'd done so much work as a music teacher I was still, I was like, oh I'm *teaching* them music and then when we finally sat down we tried out a few times I was like, oh no, we're *using* music to meet the wellbeing needs of the students and then that clicked for me, I was like oh, that's how. It just made so much difference in my teaching and even with my behaviour management and I think the way I am with the children.

While I didn't hear Kafka sing the same chant again, over the following weeks I watched him continue to implement some of the musical principles we had discussed to positively manage his students' behaviour. It is common for teacher professional learning programs to support teachers in developing their reflexivity (Barry & Durham, 2017; Bentley-Williams & Morgan, 2013; Ryan & Bourke, 2013). Nevertheless, working with Kafka in this way had piqued my curiosity about the potential benefits of using a musical framework to support teachers in developing their use of pedagogical practices through Music for Classroom Wellbeing Professional Learning.

Learning to improvise.

I also worked to support Liz to develop her use of reflexive practices. One day I arrived in the classroom to find Liz vacuuming up the remnants of a broken glass, her students sitting quietly at their tables. Liz explained to me that she had tried something

different, and it had gone wrong. She sounded embarrassed and down as she lamented the idea that she always had her best ideas at the last possible moment rather than coming up with them during the allocated planning time. Remembering the commonality of teachers experiencing challenging emotions when developing teacher identity (Pillen, Beijaard, & Brok, 2013), I responded by saying that she was doing a great job, and that you couldn't plan the best ideas. Liz didn't seem convinced, asking me "really?". When describing the arts education training of pre-service teachers, McLaren and Arnold (2016) propose that teachers need to learn to take risks and improvise in the classroom. Gould (2009) agrees, stating in an article about a radical music education that "ideally, the act of teaching is improvisatory". I continued, sharing that part of the role of a teacher as I saw it was to reflect on whatever was happening in the classroom and then to respond to the needs of her students at any given moment. Retrospectively I realised that I had always worked this way, as it is also common community music therapy practice in schools to engage in a process of constant action and reflection (McFerran & Rickson, 2014, p. 43).

When describing a process for building teacher capacity, P. Hall and Simeral (2008) write of the necessity of individualising the support provided to teachers in order to maximise their ability to self-reflect. Later in the session I modelled this way of working myself. During the assessment conversation Liz had mentioned that she was interested in learning the guitar, so I had previously borrowed her one from the music room, set her up with a chord chart and taught her how to play two chords. When I asked her how her guitar practise was going, Liz told me that she was finding it challenging, and hadn't had the time to spend on it. I empathised with Liz about the difficulty of learning an instrument as an adult and the time pressures experienced by teachers, then took the opportunity to verbalise my own reflexive practices out loud. I told her that as I reflected on what was happening, I had come up with an idea that would never have happened outside of the context of this moment. I mentioned that,

as she was aiming to develop the resilience of her students through this program, perhaps it would be helpful to practise the guitar in front of them for five minutes a day. This would have the dual purpose of alleviating her time pressures around practicing the guitar and demonstrate her own resilience to her students. Liz agreed, saying this sounded like a great idea.

One commonly used method in music therapy involves the therapist composing new lyrics to a known song to address a particular therapeutic need (F. Baker et al., 2005). Liz emailed me the day before suggesting the following plan for our work. She had taken the idea from her colleague and fellow professional learning community member Kate. However, Liz had written the lyrics herself, also demonstrating her ability to adjust the lyrics of a preconceived song to suit the focus of her session towards promoting students' ability to regulate challenging emotions.

The Teapot Song (to the tune of “I’m a little teapot” (Sanders & Kelly, 1939)).

I’m a little teapot tense and stressed

Flutter in my tummy, confused in my head

When I get all worked up I can... (*students suggest a personal strategy*).

Now I’m calm I’ll try again.

Liz also explained that she had written new lyrics to the chorus of the Pharrell Williams song “Happy” (2013) and was keen to learn to play it on guitar for her students to engage them learning about their emotions. At end interview, Liz told me that before this professional learning program “I never really made music, or I never really thought to write little songs here and there”. She also stated that song writing “kind of makes me feel like I have a bit more of a front seat in music”. I speculated about whether Liz’s success at re-writing well-known songs for her students was a contributing factor in her growing confidence as a teacher.

Modelling appropriate techniques and strategies to the classroom teacher is a key component of both school based consultative music therapy (Rickson, 2010b) and school-based teacher coaching (P. Hall & Simeral, 2008). Modelling examples to Liz while speaking to her about what I was doing seemed to be a worthwhile part of Liz's personal learning process. When I arrived at her classroom the following day, we both sat at the front of the room with our guitars. I reminded Liz of how to play an 'A' chord on the guitar, and we began playing and singing a version of the chorus of "Happy" in the key of A, with Liz's composed lyrics on the interactive whiteboard:

Your head spins if you're feeling really confused.

Your tummy flips if you're feeling really puzzled.

Take a breath if you know you need to calm down.

Now you're ready to try again, let's take it from the top.

While I switched between chords Liz continually strummed the A chord. The students remained sitting quietly on the floor in front of us and didn't react, although, to me, the song didn't sound good. Remembering our intention to work to develop the resilience of students, at the end of the song, I quietly encouraged Liz to model feeling frustrated. She caught on immediately, telling me in a loud voice "This is too hard Meg, it's not working. I'm going to give up". I played along, saying "Wow Liz, you look really stressed and frustrated". We put down our guitars and began singing her version of the teapot song a cappella, Liz following from my exaggerated musical cues. Her students watched on appearing enthralled, so I asked them to raise their hand if they had a suggestion for what their teacher could do. Hands flew up, with students suggesting in turn for Liz not to give up and encouraging her to try and calm down by taking a deep breath. Liz and I modelled this together, and she said, "I feel a bit calmer now". We finished the song:

When I get all worked up I can take a deep breath [*Model deep breath*].

Now I'm calm I'll try again.

We launched back into playing and singing “Happy” on guitar, Liz stopping and putting down her guitar a little while later, this time complaining that it was hurting her fingers and she wasn't any good at it. I asked the students if they could identify the emotion they thought Liz was feeling, and they could. We sang “The Teapot Song” again, taking a different student suggestion for a calming strategy to complete the song lyrics. The students did not take their eyes off their teacher, and the activity seemed to allow all students to take part regardless of their academic abilities. Even I looked at Liz in a new way. Liz seemed like she was both having fun and showing more of her own personality through this exercise. In this manner we finished out the session, cycling through “Happy” and “The Teapot Song” another three times. I left the classroom encouraging Liz to both keep practising the guitar in front of her students as well as use the teapot song across the week when she noticed that her students were feeling frustrated.

Generalising learning.

In the very final week, I was thrilled to watch Kafka lead his students in taking turns to come up the front of the classroom and give a speech to the grade about what role they would like to perform in their class band. Kafka had a list of social skills displayed by effective band members (such as being respectful, listening to others and taking turns) visible on the white board, and encouraged students to list their strengths according to the list.

I was reminded of the inclusive connection and belonging afforded by musicking as part of a group in a school presented by authors in the field of music education (Burnard & Dragovic, 2015) and music therapy (Elefant, 2010) alike. All students were able to succeed at this activity, and each received a round of applause at the end of their speech. It struck me that not only did the students seem regulated and calm during this exercise, but also that Kafka been able to generalise his new skills at using the affordances of music to support his

classroom practice. When I returned to interview Kafka several weeks into the following term, I was satisfied to hear that he had recently drawn on the same list of social skills to prepare students for working in groups on a numeracy activity, indicating his ability to generalise further from the activity we had worked on together. I wondered whether working on student social skills through group musical engagements had contributed to successful student learning outcomes? While I knew that of course that group music making wasn't the only way to support an early career teacher to develop their skills at teaching students' social skills, in this instance it appeared to have been a helpful and engaging starting point.

Liz also showed evidence that she could generalise content from our sessions together into her teaching practice. The week after our groundbreaking guitar playing session, I noticed that she had written the following sentences on the whiteboard of her classroom: "I have tried to write a sentence. When I get mixed up I will count to ten." Liz confirmed that the students had copied this during the handwriting session earlier that morning, demonstrating to me that she was now integrating the concept of resilience into other subjects as well as just our music session.

During our end interview Liz told me that over the weeks to come she sang her version of "Happy" song frequently, particularly during writing when student anxiety was at its peak. She explained that "And doing this, it kind of made me more aware in other subject areas in how I could connect emotional wellbeing and you know resilience and all that kind of thing, so yeah that was good." When I asked her why she thought this was the case, Liz described that she thought it was beneficial for her students to see that adults can make mistakes and be stressed as well as children. This indicated to me that she was beginning to question the norm within the current performative school cultures that teachers and students feel the need to live up to external performance standards (Strom, 2015).

Reflection on Kafka and Liz's appraisal of Music for Classroom Wellbeing

Professional Learning.

Liz alerted me to another benefit of her developing reflexivity during our end interview together. While she agreed that the resilience of her students had improved over the course of the inquiry unit, I was interested to hear her note that:

...it [the professional learning program] kind of made me more aware of my own emotions as well, because if I'm kind of telling the kids how I feel so then they could see what overwhelmed or frustrated or whatever meant it made me; it allowed me to become more in touch with my own emotions too and recognise that right now I'm feeling this, what can I do to kind of change that, you know initially I was doing that for the kids to show them but it kind of helped me as well which was good.

In a chapter outlining the interplay of a school strengths-based approach on both students and teachers, White and Waters (2015, p. 127) discuss the ways in which combining a strengths-based approach for both parties contributed to it being embedded across the school. Yoo and Carter (2017) also describe the importance of teachers having the ability to address their own emotional wellbeing in order to be able to teach this to their students in the classroom. They further encourage teachers to engage in professional learning related to emotional identity, although acknowledge that this is not often the norm in the current climate of teaching practice. H. Cahill et al. (2014) additionally notes the reciprocal nature of classroom social emotional wellbeing programs contributing to positive staff wellbeing outcomes. When I interviewed Liz six months after the program's completion, she told me that she had begun to put her favourite Italian music on in her classroom first thing in the morning to prepare herself mentally for her students' arrival.

While both Kafka and Liz indicated that they were still using music in their classroom when I returned to interview them the following year, I was particularly interested to hear

them speak of the way the program had shifted their teaching practice beyond the musical activities themselves. For example, Liz shared that “with the new knowledge that I have now I’m thinking of different ways to cater to the different needs this year,” and spoke of the way she had used a xylophone in her classroom to engage her students in numeracy learning. Kafka offered that his teacher identity had shifted as a result of the Music for Classroom Wellbeing Professional Learning Program, saying that “I feel like that I’m more able to give part of myself authentically to the students and build a better relationship that way, and I’m more confident. I’m happier.”

At times during my work with Liz and Kafka I felt a little uneasy that both teachers seemed to be viewing me as an “expert”. Liz confirmed this stance at end interview, stating “...yeah and it was just kind of good to have you there to kind of as the expert to say yes or no or maybe we should try this or yeah that was really good...” This wasn’t surprising, as it was common practice at the school to engage in weekly contact with a literacy and numeracy leader who prescribed curricular and pedagogical content. I made a conscious attempt to contribute my expertise to these teachers in a collaborative and respectful way. I was informed by the principles of collaborative community music therapy practices, in which the music therapist works with schools’ staff to support them to be a powerful agent in their own change (Rickson & McFerran, 2014). Therefore, I was pleased to hear at the end of the program that Liz also felt that she had some ownership over the process:

...it was good to kind of get my own sort of spin on songs as well, so I had a little bit of ownership over it as well; I wasn't expecting that so that was kind of good to kind of be able to come up with it, not totally on my own but have a little bit of input in the songs and stuff that we came up with as well, um, and it was good too, it was kind of a little bit free in that way, like we kind of do what I kind of thought and it was good

to have you there to give a bit of advice and stuff and yeah it was pretty kind of self-driven.

Working with Kafka and Liz had illuminated the ways in which I had tailored the Music for Classroom Wellbeing Professional Learning Program to suit the career stage and needs of each individual teacher participant. It appeared that music was an engaging starting point from which these early career teachers could deepen their own professional practices. Additionally, developing their use of teaching practices through the program appeared to support Kafka and Liz to develop their own personal identity as teachers.

When writing about the current supply and demand of teachers in Victoria, Weldon (2015) comments that further research into supporting teachers within their first five years of the profession will help to further understand and prevent attrition. The experience of working with Liz and Kafka allowed me to consider that a music therapist teacher professional learning program may have a beneficial place in addressing this agenda.

The account of Jen.

Getting to know Jen.

The ubiquity of time constraints.

When Jen volunteered for participation in the professional learning program I began to feel overwhelmed by the number of teachers I had promised to support. I wasn't the only one concerned about time constraints. As soon as I first began to explain what was involved in the program Jen mentioned, with an air of resignation, that the teachers Tuesday after school planning timeslot was often "taken away" from them by the school leadership for other purposes. I empathised with Jen viewing the leadership decision in this way and remembered the many time pressures of my own teaching career. Indeed, time pressures are commonly reported to be a major component of teacher stress (Wolgast & Fischer, 2017) as they work to balance increasing administrative duties with the complexity of educating young

people in diverse 21st century classrooms (Van Droogenbroeck et al., 2014). Time constraints are also cited to be a regular occurrence in teacher professional learning opportunities. For example, Zwart et al. (2015) remark that “schools are first and foremost organized for student learning instead of teacher learning” (p. 592). I was committed to ensuring that myself and the group of teachers had semi-regular opportunities to meet as a group for our professional learning community. Therefore, I realised that I would need to proceed with caution when planning any after school commitments. I considered that whenever I asked a teacher to work with me I was likely to be taking away time from something else they had to do. I reminded myself that the work I planned to do with teachers was intended to save them time in the long run.

Jen continued to reference time pressures through our work together. When I asked about her personal wellbeing during the assessment conversation, she stated that:

I think that the biggest challenge and the thing that affects me but also other teachers is just the amount of work that we’re expected to do, which is not a surprise, every job has work to do, but there is a lot of, you know, a lot of stress and time that is allocated to us but then other interruptions it might be taken away – we’re all very time poor and just trying to get things done, so that effects my teacher wellbeing. I don’t know if there’s much we can do about it though.

Emotional exhaustion is often cited as being a causative factor in teacher burnout (Chang, 2009). Jen also told me in this initial interview that she was pregnant and would be going on maternity leave shortly after the end of our work together. After speaking with Jen I wrote in my field notes “*she sounds burnt out*”, and marvelled that Jen volunteered for participation in this program given her experience. Retrospectively, I remember that Richardson et al. (2013) make a distinction between teachers who are burnt out, and those

who are “wornout” and may be supported to develop protective coping strategies through mentoring. I hoped that Jen fell into the latter category.

The concept of time constraints surfaced again another couple of weeks later when Jen and I began to try and organise time for a regular classroom session. I got the sense that a day in Jen’s classroom was compartmentalised into time slots:

Tuesdays? So we start with writing, then we do reading then after recess they have 40 minutes of Italian and the following 80 minutes until lunch is maths [sic] and then after lunch is religion I think or is inquiry, but next term it will be, I mean we’re doing health now, but next term we’re moving on to science, so it might be a bit harder to link with that, um, if we did do it during this time I suppose we could, how much, is 20 minutes, 20 minutes is not enough, would 30 minutes?

I wondered how the students would cope with such a segmented curriculum and again felt the importance of integrating learning content with arts activities across the week. I tried to remind myself that Jen was working under the current business-like and “edu-capitalist” (Blackmore, 2014) neoliberal school climate outlined in Chapter One. It seemed likely that Jen was experiencing the challenges of these demands. I was reminded of a study in which music therapists had anticipated that teaching parents skills at using music with their hospitalised children would lessen the parent’s experience of distress (Robb et al., 2016). Instead, this process actually contributed to more stress for the parents. I hoped I wouldn’t add to Jen’s stress levels through this professional learning program.

Classroom practice in a performative school system.

I arrived in Jen’s grade four classroom to observe her practice. As I entered, I felt a sense of claustrophobia at the lack of free space – 31 nine- and ten-year olds were crowded around the room working individually at their desks. Jen informed me that this group of students was having difficulty with their reading comprehension, and so they were working

hard on this in preparation for an upcoming test. It appeared that the comprehension worksheets and automated computer program hadn't been modified to target individual student needs in line with an inclusive approach to education (UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, 2016). I realised that an individualised approach to planning to teach students comprehension would involve Jen having the ability to think creatively; something she did not have the luxury of time or space to do. In an essay building on Freire's critical pedagogy (1972) within contemporary western schooling, Apple (2013) questions how we might "create pedagogies that are deeply connected to the daily realities of people's lives and to struggles to overcome exploitation and domination" (p. 29). I wondered if there was scope for me to support Jen to question practices that were viewed as common sense to interrupt the norm in her classroom?

As I continued to wander around the classroom watching the students work and chatting quietly to some of them, I realised that, as grade four students, they wouldn't be taking part in the national testing regime this year. I suspected that Jen's concern about improving student comprehension skills was a result of the performative school culture outlined in Chapter One that can lead teachers to sense that they are constantly being judged. No wonder Jen was feeling so much pressure.

The students were not exempt from this burden of performativity either. As the lesson ended, Jen announced that she was going to call out the correct answers to the comprehension worksheet that some of the students were filling in. As soon as she did this, students began reaching into the desks and bringing out a pencil case of what appeared to be fake money. I asked one student what she was doing, and she told me that they could earn money for good work but needed to pay money if they got a certain number of answers wrong. I kept my reactions to myself. I noted the functional way of teaching these nine and ten-year-old students how to use money. Yet I couldn't help but consider the importance of normalising

student errors in the classroom described in the education literature (Hattie, 2012, p. 124) let alone question the insidiousness of capitalistic market values making their way into this classroom. I felt that this activity was likely to reinforce the fact that the students were not beginning on an equal playing field; what did it mean if a student with learning difficulties or who had recently arrived from Syria as a refugee and was learning English for the first time had to pay more than someone who had attended the school since prep? This activity seemed indicative of an edu-capitalist education system. When reporting on an externally provided school dance program, Chappell, Rolfe, Craft, and Jobbins (2011) propose that some teachers may benefit from practical suggestions for mitigating the constraints of a performative agenda through art activities. I speculated that this might be the case for Jen.

A need for strategies to celebrate differences.

Beginning educational planning by identifying student wellbeing needs is consistent with suggestions from critical inclusive education theorist Liasidou (2015, p. 74) who discusses that for learning to occur, students need to first feel a sense of belonging in the classroom. This requires the wellbeing needs of the students to be identified and addressed, and can serve as a powerful protective factor for student wellbeing and resilience (H. Cahill et al., 2014). Beginning with an assessment of client needs is also standard in traditional music therapy practice, including school settings. Rickson (2010a) described the ways in which conducting a thorough assessment of student background was a vital precursor to setting goals for her music therapy consultation program. However, beginning program planning by considering student wellbeing needs is not necessarily congruent with the approach required of teachers within the current neoliberal education climate. Graham (2016) outlines the ways in which a linear approach to teaching the academic curriculum is described the norm within the current educational milieu. Indeed, at this school it appeared that planning how to cover “the curriculum” took precedence over the identification of

student wellbeing needs. Each teacher was regularly provided a curriculum focus by their respective curriculum leaders in literacy, numeracy, inquiry and religion and advised to plan their classroom program accordingly. Committed to upholding the social justice and activist stance of community music therapy practice (Stige & Aarø, 2011, p. 23), I hoped to be able to disrupt the order of the planning process in my work with Jen.

During our assessment conversation Jen told me that she had a couple of students in her classroom who received funding from the government as part of the program for students with disabilities (2017). She explained that she was required to fill out forms for these students detailing what extra supports they were receiving to address their social and emotional needs. Jen went on to say that “this program will be perfect for that”, as the pressures of delivering curriculum from the traditional subject areas (in particular literacy, numeracy and religion) meant that she didn’t get around to addressing these needs in her everyday teaching. I felt uneasy justifying the program so that she could tick a few boxes, and yet realised that the experience of Jen was the reality for many teachers with increasingly diverse student cohorts and needs. Creative and artistic classroom programs have been described as both promoting tolerance and acceptance of others (Cropley, 2001, p. 133), building peace between students (Cabedo-Mas, Nethsinghe, & Forrest, 2017) and fostering understanding of “the other” (J.-H. Kim & Wiehe-Beck, 2016). I considered that perhaps my work with Jen may begin with supporting her to normalise and celebrate student difference. I hoped that bringing music into the classroom might be one way of demonstrating classroom practices that started with responding to the needs of the students in the room.

I walked into the classroom the week after, prepared to lead a musical activity about acceptance of differences. I was disappointed when, after getting students to help to complete the lyrics to a song I had written on the board using a simple and fast music therapy “fill-in-the-blank” method (F. Baker, 2015, p. 99) Jen told me that she had to quickly go to the

bathroom. While I wanted to ensure that the students themselves enjoyed the activity, the main aim of the venture was to expose Jen to some possibilities for our future work together. Nonetheless, I began anyway, stamping my feet to create a beat and singing the following call and response chant to the tune of a traditional military cadence, using gesture to point to the students when it was their turn to sing:

We are the kids of _____ school,

(We are the kids of _____ school)

We are fun and we are cool,

(We are fun and we are cool)

We're sometimes different sometimes same,

(We're sometimes different sometimes same)

So, let's play the same and different game,)

So, let's play the same and different game)

What do..., *(What do...)*

You like? *(You like?)*

The students seemed to be participating eagerly, with the majority singing along. After a couple of repetitions, I noticed that Jen had re-entered the classroom, but was speaking to an education support staff member with her face turned away from me. I felt incredibly frustrated by this but tried to have compassion for Jen's situation – it really was no surprise that she was taking the opportunity to get something else done while I was taking care of her students. However, I didn't want this to become a habit so with five minutes to go before the recess bell I decided to call her over by saying "come and have a look at our game". We ran the activity two more times together, Jen joining in singing straight away. In between each repetition of the song I made sure to reinforce the acceptance of students' similarities and differences by using language such as "wow, did you three know that you

three like skateboarding? That could be something to talk about at recess!” or “oh, you’re the only person in this whole room who was born in Lebanon; that’s so unique!”

I ended the activity by verbally reinforcing the aims of the musical game. Jen then took back over ownership of the grade by thanking me and asking the students to provide some closing thoughts about what they had learned. Just after the bell rang, I was thrilled to hear Jen’s words to her grade:

All great responses, and I think maybe when we go outside today, we might want to keep our similarities and differences in mind and maybe just think about that when you’re playing with people today... When I go and sit in the staff room today, I’m going to try and sit next to somebody who I don’t normally sit next to so I can learn a little bit about their culture and how they’re different to me, or similar to me.

While modelling techniques are regularly used in consultancy music therapy (Rickson & McFerran, 2014) and classroom based teacher coaching (P. Hall & Simeral, 2008), learning through observation is not always an effective way for teachers to develop new ways of working. I left this session with the realisation that Jen was a fast learner as she had been able to tap into the way I was working through a brief moment of modelling alone.

Preparing to use music to support student learning.

Planning with Jen.

Jen was also highly organised, and emailed me through an annotated plan for student learning and a personal professional learning focus (AITSL, 2017) within a few days of our first professional learning meeting. This allowed us to quickly to build ideas for the targeted work we would do together in the classroom. One day after Jen had come in from yard duty we sat down in the staffroom and chatted about our intention to promote student social skills. As Jen had expressed interest in using percussion instruments in her classroom, we decided to plan activities around the students playing instruments to address the goals identified. I drew

on my knowledge of music education (Burnard & Dragovic, 2015) and music therapy programs in schools (McFerran & Hunt, 2008) where percussion instruments use had been described to foster students' sense of belonging and connection. Within ten minutes we had planned a musical activity for students to begin to work towards the learning intention to "brainstorm the characteristics of an effective team" as cited in the curriculum framework (Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority, 2016). Principal and teacher coach P. Hall and Simeral (2008) discuss a shift away from subject specific coaching to more of a teacher focus when working on teachers' professional learning skills. However, I felt that having this curriculum focus that transcended discrete subject areas was extremely beneficial for planning with Jen and provided a sense of legitimacy to the work we were doing. A couple of days later Jen uploaded a working curriculum planning document to our shared online drive, and we communicated over email to update this from week to week. When I returned to Jen's classroom after the school holidays I was thrilled to see that she had borrowed a set of six untuned percussion instruments from the music room and was ready to begin enacting our plan.

Students experience some freedom.

Later on in the school term Jen and I gave the students the task of creating a piece of music with a group of peers to address a criterion from the Personal and Social Capability Curriculum Guidelines (Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority, 2016). Hattie (2008, p. 170) describes the ways in which informing students of specific intentions for the lesson can help to make the process of learning visible, as well as ensuring students know how their success will be measured. Jen took ownership for leading this activity and clearly introduced this to the students. I also noticed that Jen had taken care to let the students know the expectations of the session by writing a learning intention on the board (using the acronym WALT to signify 'we are learning to'). On this occasion, Jen wrote the following

sentence on the board: *WALT: work effectively with group members to create a piece of music*. She went on to explain that for students to be successful they would need to engage in the group processes they had brainstormed over previous weeks.

As soon as Jen had split students into groups and provided them with instructions, they moved into different areas of the cramped classroom. One group spilled out into the corridor but were told to come back in as a teacher was testing students in the classroom next door. The freedom experienced by the students was tangible as they ran around the classroom, banging instruments and talking excitedly. As the noise levels rose I began to feel discomfort at the seeming chaos of the classroom and wondered whether I would need to manage Jen's stress levels? McFerran, Crooke, and Bolger (2017) mentioned the ways in which some teachers were not comfortable with the contrast between their usual controlled classroom environments and the chaotic nature of the activities during community music therapy informed programs. Therefore, I was extremely surprised to note that Jen seemed calm, moving between groups and appearing not to notice the cacophony of noise. As the initial tension abated I observed that, despite the noise levels, students seemed extremely engaged and were productively creating their musical compositions. When outlining the potential for classroom music programs, Allan and Cope (2004) expressed their belief that "letting go and loosening up" is required by teachers if they wish to enact inclusive practices. In support of this notion, Galton and Page (2015) reported that teachers spoke of the way their classroom practice had changed from more rigid to chaotic through their engagement with an externally provided arts for wellbeing program. Jen called the students back together and asked me to lead the student presentations so she could video students using her laptop. Despite the previous pandemonium, it seemed that the groups had worked well together. While their musical offerings were undeveloped and showed a lack of technical musical skill, I was impressed to note that student audience members were able to identify interpersonal

skills being used, as per the curriculum-based aims of the activity. I wondered what, if anything, this inclusive activity that had promoted dialogue among students and between students and their teacher meant for Jen's classroom practice across the remainder of the week?

Supporting Jen to counter the norm.

Violin in the corridor.

The next week Jen told me that for the remainder of term her student teacher would be taking full control of the class, and therefore running our music sessions. I questioned what implication this would have for her professional learning. Before I left for my next session I asked Jen whether, given the extra time she might have, she would like to play some music for herself. Jen told me that that sounded good, and that she would love to learn how to play Schubert's (1825) "Ave Maria" and "Hallelujah" (Cohen, 1984) on the violin. Jen explained that she couldn't read music and had previously used YouTube to assist her in playing simple violin melodies. Later that week I looked up how to play these songs on YouTube and sent the links to Jen by email, reminding her to bring her violin the following Tuesday.

A week later I arrived in the classroom to find the student teacher already working with the students, and Jen seated at her desk at the back of the classroom. I was taken aback when Jen initiated asking me to follow her out into the corridor to practise her violin. She set up her laptop on a table outside the classroom door and put on one of the YouTube clips. Jen also opened a book to follow along an alternative notation for "Hallelujah" and proceeded to play along, asking me to assist her with pitching of the notes.

I didn't know anything about playing the violin but was able to draw on my own musicality and aural skills to support her to practise. It was laborious work as Jen was reliant on her ability to memorise the fingering for the melody, but she seemed to be enjoying

herself. I couldn't believe what was happening and certainly hadn't expected Jen and I to be engaging in this way given the way she had spoken about time pressures earlier in the term. I wrote "*Jen didn't seem to care or notice what the students were doing*", and at one stage even closed the door to the classroom to focus on her playing without additional background noise. While we only spent 15 minutes in the corridor, this felt transgressive for a teacher who spent so much time stressed about preparing students for performance on literacy and numeracy tests. It felt like Jen's students were not the only ones partaking in positive school experiences through group musical engagements. The next week at our professional learning meeting I was delighted to hear Jen tell her colleagues that she had played "Hallelujah" for her father at his birthday celebration over the weekend as it was his favourite song. Seminal theorist Maxine Greene (2001) has written of the ways in which arts in education, while not a panacea for the issues of the day, can help to open up the awareness of individuals towards alternative ways of being in the world. I was hopeful Jen had been reminded that spending time at school could be enjoyable and relaxing through our work together.

The week later when I bumped into Jen in the staffroom she seemed happier than I'd ever seen her. I asked if she had brought her violin and she apologised and said she had totally forgotten, though assured me she would bring it in for next Tuesday. Although I was disappointed that we wouldn't be playing in the corridor again, all I could do was smile and say "great". I reflected on descriptions of community music therapy work taking place within a liminal space (Andsell & DeNora, 2014, p. 233), and the ways in which music therapists need to become skilled at recognising possibilities for engaging in therapeutic work. I never did have the opportunity to have a final violin lesson with Jen but remained glad that we seized the chance when it presented itself and wondered about the impact of that single short session.

Reflection on Jen's appraisal of Music for Classroom Wellbeing Professional

Learning.

At our end interview I asked Jen about her experience of playing the violin in the corridor, she agreed that it was fantastic, explaining with a giggle that it was “me time, and me time is good”. Jen continued:

... I do try to practise and it does relax me, I do like playing the violin, especially when I am successful at it and I know I have to practise more, um, but if I'm feeling particularly stressed out I'll go back to the songs that I do know really well cos I know I can play them really well and not annoy the neighbours with all the screeching and everything and I just play it for a little bit...

Hearing this, I questioned whether in actuality this session we had shared perpetuated Jen's sense of music as a performative activity in which there are right and wrong notes rather than one in which she could relax. Conversely, when speaking about her students' music making in the classroom, I was relieved to hear her say “like we saw, it doesn't have to sound good”. Jen continued to express that:

I expected more of like a musical talent kind of focus to get some music skills, but then we kind of took a different direction which I think was more beneficial like, you know, some, it's a bit harsh but some of the kids weren't that talented but that's ok, we were developing other skills you know the social skills and the, all that stuff about bullying and working together which was really rich and beneficial for them.

Crooke (2016) cautions against dualistic modes of thinking that separate the proposed benefits of school music programs into intrinsic or musical outcomes, and extrinsic outcomes (such as those pertaining to wellbeing described by Jen). Nevertheless, it appeared that setting explicit intentions to address student wellbeing needs had been helpful for this teacher.

During the interview Jen shared that she was determined to continue with classroom music making into the new school term and had timetabled it into the art sessions linked to the grade four inquiry unit. Jen explained that she had planned for the students to each make their own musical instrument and work in groups to create another piece of music with the instruments they had made. She added that she would never have thought to do this without the professional learning program. This anecdote supported my initial goal of building sustained outcomes for teachers throughout this professional learning program (McFerran, Crooke, & Hattie, 2017), and provides a minor but realistic example of one potential way in which a shift in a teachers' program planning may be sustained into a new school term. Shieh (2012) outlines the ways in which teachers' restricted personal agency within the current educational climate may be combatted through engaging with a professional association. This engagement can then in turn contribute to curriculum reform. I considered that perhaps the professional learning program had supported this process for Jen.

Ultimately however, as Jen continued to evaluate her participation in the professional learning program, I wasn't surprised to hear that the pressure of time constraints hadn't abated. While she agreed that setting aside a designated time each week for music and my presence in the classroom ensured that music for wellbeing sessions took place, on some level the program had still contributed to her experience of time pressure stress. Jen explained that she had often felt anxious when I arrived on a Tuesday morning and that:

I was a bit like "oh my God", there are so many other things that I need to get through, and I'm concerned that I'll get to the end of the week and I won't have them done, so I think for my, for my wellbeing it might have worked a bit better later on in the week where I knew that ok, I've already done all those things, it's ok, I've only got a couple more things to get through this week, we're going to do music, you know,

I've got it all clear in my mind, already achieved all of that, now I just need to do this, piece of cake.

I had naively hoped that working with Jen would support her to shift some of the stress she was experiencing from the pressure of the wider performative school climate. However, I now recognised that this hadn't eventuated, and that Jen's classroom practices were well entrenched. It felt to me that delivering a preventative wellbeing program with Jen's students had highlighted the need for a preventative wellbeing program of her own. I considered how different teaching could have been for Jen if there had been a critical arts-based education component of her teacher training like those described in the literature (Abrahams (2006); McLaren & Arnold, 2016).

I was pleasantly surprised that Jen made the effort to come into school six months later for the follow up interview, pushing her four-month old baby in his pram. I was even more thrilled to hear that Jen had bought her newborn son a box of instruments and was making up songs with him as:

I know how important music is through doing the music program with you. So, I wanted to introduce music to him, and I've heard people say that music from a young age is really good for them, and it's just, it's fun.

This finding echoed the experience of a participant in the music therapist teacher support program presented by (Coombes & Tombs-Katz, 2009). Working with Jen had highlighted the impossibility of knowing what outcomes may be sustained after the music therapist has left the school context. It occurred to me that the discomfort of being open to Jen taking the program in her own direction was exactly what I had hoped she could develop her ability to do with her own students.

Chapter conclusion.

Reflecting on the process of partnering with Kafka, Liz and Jen allowed the emergence of understandings about the ways that teachers of different career stages had been supported within the Music for Classroom Wellbeing Professional Learning Program. Thus, a major finding of this inquiry was that these teachers early in their careers tended to seek support with developing their teaching practices through the use of classroom musical engagements. This was indicated by the ways in which several of the teachers shared their growth from the professional learning program with school leadership at their end of year progress review.

Each of these three teachers did sustain the use of musical practices after the completion of the professional learning program. However, the most impactful sustained benefits and practices from their professional learning program appeared to be their growth in their identity as a teacher. This finding marks a shift from the intended outcomes of music therapist teacher support programs previously reported in the literature, in which music therapists were inclined to aim to sustain teachers' ability to use music with their students. Rather, collaborating with these three teachers to use musical engagements in their classroom served as a starting point for the teachers to use pedagogies that were implicitly engaging and inclusive, yet differed from the norm. This finding aligns with several reports from the music therapist teacher support literature critically reviewed in Chapter Two in which authors commented on the ways in which music therapy allowed teachers to see students in a different light. The discoveries of this inquiry suggest that music therapists are well-placed to intentionally use musical engagements as a starting point to support classroom teachers to develop according to the Australian national standards of teacher practice (AITSL, 2017). However, it is suggested that music therapists working in this manner relinquish the expectation of measuring sustained outcomes from teachers' participation in the professional

learning program. Enacting this suggestion within this professional learning program has allowed the illustration of teacher support practices that counters the use of accountability measures typical of professional learning programs in the current neoliberal education climate.

Chapter Eight: Supporting Amelia to Foster Self-Care

Chapter introduction.

This final ethnographic account chapter of Amelia illuminates the teacher growth domain relating to the ways in which teachers were supported to foster self-care. Within the context of this thesis, self-care is understood as the practices that an individual engages in to maintain their ability to manage the impact of stress in their everyday personal and work life. Furthermore, this thesis upholds a critical perspective on the concept of self-care in education. As such, self-care was further understood to relate to the use of practices that enabled individuals and groups to counter the impact of neoliberalism. This conceptualisation of self-care does not absolve the responsibility of employers to provide adequate work conditions that promote wellbeing. However, within this thesis it is contended that the use of self-care practices may support teachers to engage in acts of social justice that contribute towards changing the systemic conditions in their own school context.

This account pertaining to Amelia outlines the practice fatigue that is regularly experienced by passionate teachers who have remained in the profession for a significant number of years. As mentioned previously, there is an understanding within this thesis that effective teacher professional learning sits at the nexus of the personal and professional (Mockler, 2013). The benefits of having the opportunity to receive personal support while simultaneously engaging in a musically oriented community of professional practice are identified. This account presents an alternative to the common standards-oriented professional learning programs through highlighting the use of community music therapy

informed practices to support Amelia's performance of wellness and personal self in the classroom. Additionally, Amelia's performance of everyday acts of resistance through her participation in Music for Classroom Wellbeing Professional Learning illustrate her growing power for leading others within the school community. Rather than formally setting intentions for Amelia's professional learning against the national practice standards, nor student learning intentions aligned to the curriculum guidelines, collaborating with Amelia took a different path. Instead, collaborating with Amelia within this professional learning program centred on providing support so that Amelia may comply with the ethical obligation to be emotionally well enough to teach in the classroom (Victorian Institute of Teaching, 2015).

The account of Amelia.

Getting to know Amelia.

Amelia's depth of practice experience.

When I first observed Amelia, she was finishing a lesson where students had to create their own pattern out of classroom materials, and then record it in their maths books. Towards the end of the lesson Amelia surprised me by calling the students to the mat and leading them to take turns to perform a musical pattern on percussion instruments in groups of three to reinforce their numeracy learning. A couple of weeks later I returned to Amelia's classroom first thing in the morning. I noticed that Amelia pressed play on a YouTube clip of some quiet vocal music from the Iraqi Chaldean tradition as the students entered the classroom. As I later watched her read a book about the experience of a young refugee student, I reflected on the list of school-based protective factors described by H. Cahill et al. (2014) that support students wellbeing and resilience. After leaving the classroom, I wrote in my field journal *"The morning session reminded me of the political act of teaching and how much of your own self you can put into it"*.

Amelia appeared to be a teacher who was already using critical and creative pedagogies to counter the traditional teaching practices of standardised testing regimes. It seemed to me that Amelia was adept at integrating music into her classroom teaching practice. Furthermore, Amelia seemed to be working hard to create a positive and engaging classroom climate in which all students felt a sense of belonging. I felt curious about how I might be able to support a teacher with such a wealth of expertise.

The demands of the modern teaching role.

Dialoguing with Amelia in her assessment conversation provided some clues about how I may be able to support her in the Music for Classroom Wellbeing Professional Learning Program. Through our conversation, I learned that after 32 years of teaching Amelia felt that:

...working in the classroom is getting harder that we need, that I need more of an outlet and I think the kids need that too, they need to experience it not only for learning but also as a form of relaxation and for wellbeing.

When speaking about her musical background, Amelia outlined the ways in which she spent hours in her youth listening to records, writing down song lyrics and then singing them with her sisters, explaining that:

...when I got married, my husband, he'd put on his music, and my kids, they put on their music so I listen to all theirs' but I was, I'm not really listening to mine and I'm not really tuned into what I like.

To community music therapy theorists Andsell and DeNora (2014), engaging with music through our everyday existence “can help furnish a sense of ‘me’” (p. 134). Hanser and Mandel (2010) further describes a range of strategies that individuals may use in order to create a personal musical plan in order to combat the impact of stress (p. 48). I wondered whether this program might be about Amelia reconnecting with her musical self to address

her own wellbeing needs rather than leading musical activities to target student learning outcomes?

Interestingly, when I asked Amelia to speak about classroom wellbeing she immediately opened up about the ways in which she had needed to focus more on her own wellbeing over the past few years because “the job is just so demanding”. Amelia explained that while she wanted to learn to use music to promote classroom inclusivity, she also wanted to have a bit of fun with it as “you get so bogged down, bogged down in what you’re supposed to do and how you’re supposed to do it and get it in on time”. I reminded myself that one of the ethical standards upheld by teachers in Victoria related to the need to “ensure they have the physical, mental and emotional capacity to carry out their professional responsibilities” (Victorian Institute of Teaching, 2015). Engaging in contextually negotiated ethical practices is also a key tenet of community music therapy work (Stige & Aarø, 2011, p. 24). With this lens, consciously working to support the personal wellbeing of teachers becomes an appropriate motivation for teacher professional learning.

Sharing in the professional learning community.

C. Stewart (2014) describes a shift in focus from teachers receiving externally provided professional development towards contemporary models of professional learning that take place in collegiate professional learning communities. I was therefore also pleased to hear Amelia identify that she needed a support network as I had planned a professional learning community component to the program.

Authors suggest that when working to build teachers’ and pre-service teachers confidence at using music in their classroom it is imperative that they are engaged in active music making experiences (Joseph & Southcott, 2012; McLaren & Arnold, 2016; Webb, 2016). With this in mind, as well as making sure I provided food and drink to share, I decided

to include active music making in each of our professional learning community meetings to both normalise this as well as share examples of the teachers' work.

I started to get excited when Amelia, as an experienced teacher, expressed that she would like to focus her professional learning on promoting the affordances of music across the school. In our very first professional learning community meeting Amelia told her peers that "I wanna move away from perfection, and always having to have it perfected and performance based and it has to be for a reason like church or assembly; to move it away to be a bit more creative". I hoped that the musical activity I had planned for our meeting would support Amelia's wishes.

Song parody is a commonly used technique in music therapy practice in which the music therapist supports others to rewrite the words to a favourite song to tell aspects of their own story. F. Baker (2015) has described song parody as a quick method for engaging musically with a group in a limited timeframe. F. Baker and Ballantyne (2013) describe the ways in which engaging in song parody with members of a retirement village contributed towards finding a common narrative between group members and in turn enhanced feelings of connectedness. I introduced this method towards the end of our first professional learning community meeting, encouraging group members to substitute words in the popular song "We will rock you" (May, 1977) and to then sing our new version together. While several of the teachers were hesitant to put forward suggestions, Amelia seemed absorbed in this process and appeared to be establishing herself as a group leader. When I prompted the teachers to set some goals for their work together by completing the sentence beginning with "We will..." she suggested the lyrics "we are all in it together. Within a professional learning community of music teachers, Gottesman (2017) relays the process of dialogue and critical praxis that supported the teachers to transform practice within their school context. McFerran and Rickson (2014) similarly explore the ways in which community music therapy school-

based programs can support an activist agenda in which participants work towards countering hegemonic school practices. As Amelia had already voiced her disdain at the performative school culture, I was excited to hear her suggest the lyric “we will be heard” within our song parody, initiating the idea that this community of teachers could work towards changing the dominant school culture. When I led the singing of the completed version a few minutes later, Amelia sang along with gusto:

We will we will collaborate

We will we will be heard

We are all in it together and we’re going to be heard

And we’re going to make a change

We’re going to meet every fortnight, share our ideas and

Eat some snacks, we’re the new rat pack.

We will we will have fun (x 4)

Johansson and Vinthagen (2016) write about the everyday acts of resistance used by teachers to enact their power against the dominant educational narrative. I speculated about whether writing and singing these lyrics would constitute an everyday act of resistance for Amelia.

Supporting Amelia to foster self-care through singing.

Song writing with Amelia: Performing self through singing in the classroom.

In the last week of term Amelia and I met before school to plan classroom musical engagements for the following term. However, when I arrived at her classroom Amelia told me she was feeling flat and didn’t want to put a whole lot of effort into spreading music across the school when it wouldn’t be appreciated. While I was disappointed, I asked Amelia if she would like to start with a song she liked instead. Amelia agreed, so I let go of my plans and focused on Amelia.

Drawing on my music therapy knowledge of the use of client preferred music, I asked Amelia if she had a song that she would like to sing with her students. Amelia suggested “You are My Sunshine” (Taylor & Spivey, 1939). As she had contributed so readily during the professional learning community meeting, I proposed that we do another song parody to rewrite this song for use with her students. I began to sing and play a simple guitar accompaniment while typing Amelia’s lyrical suggestions into a word document. Within ten minutes we had drafted the lyrics together about knowing that you have someone to welcome you at school. Amelia sang with me once quickly before we ran out of time and students and several mums began to enter the room. I said, “should we try it with the kids?”, not wanting to lose momentum, and we sang our version for the students:

Verse 1

When I woke up this morning

I wondered what the day would bring?

Who will I play with? Will I be happy?

Will my teacher smile at me?

Chorus

I need some sunshine, I want some sunshine

To make me happy if skies are grey

I need friendship, and to be kind

I hope I have some sunshine today.

Verse 2

When I’m on my way to school

I think back to yesterday,

When I felt lonely, my sunshine came over

I can’t wait to see them again!

Verse 3

I get to school, I see my sunshine

And it makes me feel so calm

I'm not anxious any longer

Because I know that I am with my sunshine

Before we began singing Amelia introduced the song, telling her students:

Now, the words are to one of my favourite, favourite songs. And it was a song that my grandfather used to sing to me when I was a little girl and it always made me happy, so I'm just passing it on to you a little bit.

Stige and Aarø (2011, p. 22) describe the ways in which musicking within community music therapy practice can involve individuals performing a healthy version of themselves. Amelia had certainly shown a personal side to herself to her students through her performance of this song. I considered whether singing a version of "You are my sunshine" in the classroom was performative in this healthy sense of the word? As I left the classroom Amelia smiled and said, "Now I feel happy, ready for the day, thanks that was fun". I agreed that it had felt successful and reflected in my notes that this was possibly due to forgoing a focus on written planning and documentation by ensuring that Amelia had a successful and positive experience straight away through our spontaneous and creative music making.

During my first session with Amelia after the holidays we revisited her version of "You are my Sunshine" by singing it with the students. I noticed myself feeling tense because I personally didn't like the song and though I suspected that it also wasn't the preferred music of the students, they seemed to be enjoying themselves regardless. I remembered McFerran and Crooke (2015) writing about school principals' perceptions of the barriers and enablers to the implementation of music in Australian schools. One identified barrier was when programs were not culturally relevant to the staff members involved (for example, hip hoppers

encouraged to become classical musicians). As I prepared to leave, Amelia asked to keep a copy of the words at the end of the session so they could practise it across the week. I wondered whether this was an example of what it looked like to really take teacher preferences into account when planning music activities for the classroom? Later during reflection at the after school professional learning community meeting Amelia described her pleasure at the way in which a few of her students had brought a song that they had written into class, saying (as if to extend on the book title of music sociologist Tia De Nora (2000)) “Music can be a part of everybody’s life, not just [pop singer] Beyoncé”. While it appeared that Amelia was referring to her students, I thought to myself that perhaps Amelia was also considering this insight in reference to herself.

Singing for pleasure as “self-care”.

Indeed, when I returned to Amelia’s classroom the following week Amelia told me with what I perceived to be an excited giggle, “I have to thank you very much. I’ve enquired about joining a choir!” Being part of a group when singing in a community choir has been described as having the potential to contribute towards the psychosocial wellbeing of choir members (N. A. J. Stewart & Lonsdale, 2016). I hoped that this would be the same for Amelia, but wondered what I had done that had prompted Amelia to take this action?

McKay (2019) has recently outlined the use of arts practices when supporting the self-care practices of beginning teachers during teacher training program. I started to consider that the use of practices informed by music therapy might also be a means of supporting experienced teachers such as Amelia to engage in reflexive self-care processes. I also questioned whether receiving support from myself, as well as membership in the of the professional learning community had spurred on Amelia to develop her own musical practices as a form of self-care.

Indeed, my own musical self-care practices had strengthened through the course of the program. Gonzalez (2011) comments that examining one's own musical culture may assist the music therapist in developing deeper insight into their work. I laughed out loud on arrival at the school one morning to find that I had accidentally audio recorded my commute in the car. Rather than sitting in silence as I usually did, this particular morning the audio recorder had captured me singing along to a playlist of favourite songs at the top of my voice. I felt energised and happy; even facilitating this professional learning program had reminded *me* how good singing felt!

I translated this awareness to my practice. While I continued to provide guidance to Amelia about leading an inclusive classroom band with her students, I had well and truly shifted my focus towards Amelia, her wellbeing needs and love of singing. On arriving at Amelia's classroom before school one morning I asked about her own favourite song. Amelia volunteered that her favourite song was "Perfect Day" by Lou Reed (1972). While she was sitting at her desk preparing for her students' arrival, I searched online for the chords and lyrics and began playing and singing the chorus. Amelia stood up and came over to me, singing in a lyrical voice, closing her eyes at points. I later wondered if she identified with Lou Reed as he sang about the things that "just keep me hanging on" (1972), and considered whether Amelia's newfound engagement with music was supporting her to "hang on" despite the challenges of the classroom she had identified. Authors in the field of music therapy have commented on the benefit of engaging in musical self-care practices to assist with resisting burnout and staying in the profession (Clements-Cortes, 2013; Y. Kim, 2016). I started to contemplate whether part of my role in this music therapist teacher support program was to assist teachers to foster self-care alongside enriching musicality and developing their teaching practices.

Handing over ownership of the professional learning community.

Sharing at the whole school staff meeting.

As previously mentioned, we began to organise a presentation at the whole school staff meeting within our professional learning community meetings. Amelia suggested that we could play recorded music while the teachers entered the staff room, as she did with her students each morning. The following night we played Lou Reed's "Perfect Day" as teachers trickled in to find their seats. When it was Amelia's turn to present, she was overwhelmingly positive about the professional learning program, explaining that it had given her "a lift". She spoke of the way she had been able to connect with her students in a manner that was fun, relaxed and calm, and that she wanted to keep it going. In an act of vulnerability that countered the typically restrained atmosphere of staff meetings at this school, Amelia also opened up about her personal challenges:

I've made a greater connection of giving myself opportunities of actually listening to music, to stop and to listen, cos, and I've found like I love my teaching, I'm passionate about my teaching like you are, like you all are as well, but the demands of teaching take quite a bit out of you, and sometimes you feel frustrated, sometimes you're a bit down, and I was trying to find a way of dealing with it because in the end it does reflect a bit on, it's not conducive to my workplace, so then I've felt, every morning I put on music when I come to the classroom, I put on a candle have a nice smelling classroom as well and it makes me feel good, and also it's helping me to deal with my stress, and I think my performance as a teacher has improved over that period as well, cos I'm just a lot more calmer about things and not letting the, the little things get to me.

Amelia later told me during an interview at the end of the program:

I'm just finding that the world is struggling to share, struggling to share parts of themselves and struggling to, yep, just that whole notion of sharing is just, so to share music with each other is quite powerful really.

I remembered critical educators hooks & West (1991) writing about the acts of resistance that educators can employ through small political actions. Had Amelia consciously intended to perform a different mode of teacher presentation at the staff meeting through what she had chosen to share? Amelia's openness to frankly sharing her experiences also increased my awareness about the potential for using music in seemingly small ways to change the scope of a teacher's day. At the same time, I was also extremely embarrassed to hear Amelia speak so glowingly about the program when I didn't feel I had done much at all. Hadley (2013) reminds creative arts therapists that it is not enough to simply have awareness of our feelings in our work, but we must strive to use our privileges to disrupt the dominant narrative. I used this opportunity to question how I could encourage the teachers to recognise their own agency as leaders through their participation.

Continuing the Music for Classroom Wellbeing Professional Learning Community without me.

During a professional learning meeting towards the end of the program Amelia suggested "it would be good if we could keep coming together just every now and then, wouldn't it?" I intended to follow the suggestion of Rickson and McFerran (2014) to establish music in the school community. As such, I initiated plans to meet with the teachers for one final professional learning community meeting together after the end of the program. After spending some time attempting to fit in with the teachers' school calendar I gave up and instead invited them to meet me at a restaurant after work one night, ten weeks after the end of the program. Meeting outside of the school grounds felt appropriate as I wanted to acknowledge the teachers' large contribution to the research project and celebrate their hard

work. I noticed as we ate and drank together that meeting offsite also seemed to allow the teachers to relax and speak freely.

During the dinner Amelia voiced that she didn't want things to go back to the way that they were when "music just happens in the music room", and that the professional learning community teachers needed to stick together to keep it up. I felt excited – it seemed that Amelia was emerging as a leader who could drive this continued action needed to sustain the professional learning community at this school after I had left. (D. Hall & McGinity, 2015) outline the potential of small acts of resistance in disrupting the impact of neoliberal educational policies. I wondered whether the professional learning program had afforded Amelia a rare avenue to join with others to resist policy that she disagreed with? After the teachers had made a plan to meet without me the following week, Amelia turned to me and asked me what I would like to see for the group. I told them that I knew how committed they all were to using music to promote classroom wellbeing, but that I also knew how busy they were and didn't want them to be too hard on themselves. I continued by saying that I thought that if they worked together, supported each other and used their personal strengths - Amelia's leadership and initiation skills, Kafka's musical and technical expertise, Kate's ability to integrate literacy, Liz's creative ideas on the spot, Justine's experience with student wellbeing - then they could keep each other going. I left the restaurant feeling that the critical consciousness of this group of teachers had been raised, though wondered whether it could sustain itself without the support and resources of the school leadership or myself?

The week after I was copied into an email from Amelia with the minutes to their first professional learning community meeting without me. The email began, "*thanks for a lovely breakfast meeting this morning. It made a nice change from the school setting!*" and continued with details of plans for how the teachers hoped to use the Personal and Social Capability as the "foundation" of their Music for Classroom Wellbeing Program next year.

Owen (2016) outlines that when a professional learning community of teachers can transform from seeing education as a private to a collegiate act, teachers can “reinvigorate” their passion “with teacher and student wellbeing being the ultimate outcomes” (p. 417). I felt hopeful that these teachers were well placed to sustain outcomes from our work together into the new year.

Reflection on Amelia’s appraisal of the Music for Classroom Wellbeing

Professional Learning.

I interviewed Amelia a couple of weeks before the end of the school term as she prepared to go on long service leave. During this conversation Amelia articulated differences between my style of facilitation and how she saw typical school practice, in which teachers are told:

Here's your new program, off you go, take it into your classroom, we want it implemented straight away, and, so you haven't got real ownership of it, you've just got to get your head around it and do it cos that's what you're expected to do whereas this one is though just take a little bit of it, the bit that suits you and work on that and build on that and sort of, take it out; that's the approach I like.

She also expressed that she viewed my facilitation style as “coming in and just gently leading us on and showing us, planting seeds”. Amelia explained that she had discussed the program in her annual review meeting, expressing that it had helped her see how creativity could come into curriculum as otherwise “it can become a bit beige”. I took this to be indicative of the collaborative skills I learned through my training and practice as a music therapist. I also thought that Amelia had viewed the program in direct contrast to the norm of professional development programs subscribing to a standards agenda.

Indeed, when speaking about the impact of the program on Amelia’s personal wellbeing, she divulged that her participation in the program had:

...helped me to connect with my family again, you know my kids, they're in their 20s but they'd go off to their own rooms and just play their own music and I wasn't having you know, not listening to that much either with sort of everything else that's going on in your head, so that made me stop and think and listen and yeah. So now I've asked them to share their music with me, so every Sunday night we have, yeah we share our music around we have a roast meal and [husband] bought one of those little speakers you know with an iPod and each of us put on a song that we [like] and we listen and we share it with each other and that's what it's all about.

When I returned to interview Amelia the following year, Amelia had continued to integrate music to address students' wellbeing into her daily teaching practices. In her study of four student music teachers' wellbeing and identity development, Pellegrino (2015) illustrates the ways in which "participants used music making *outside* the classroom to remind them of who they were, and music making inside the classroom helped realise what kind of music teachers they wanted to be and become" (p. 189). This seemed to be the case for Amelia as she had reconnected with her musical self outside of school through joining a choir and listening to music with her family. Amelia's newfound musical self-care practices appeared to have a positive flow on effect for Amelia's teaching in general, and music making with her students did appear to reconnect Amelia with the kind of teacher that she wanted to be.

Chapter conclusion.

Pavlicevic and Fouché (2014) argue for the need for music therapists to think flexibly and consider new boundaries of our work when considering the sustainability of the profession. In an evaluation of a music therapy skill sharing program with teachers, Coombes and Tombs-Katz (2009) mention that, although this was not the aim of the program, learning to "release their own stress" (p. 6) had been an unexpected outcome for one teacher

participant. Within this professional learning program, offering care and nurturing to Amelia through music therapy informed practices appeared to stimulate Amelia to seek new ways of caring for herself. Additionally, the findings from this study align with the contention made by Moffatt, Ryan, and Barton (2016) who argue that engaging in reflexive processes in community with others can support the self-care practices of creative professionals.

While intentionally working to foster the self-care of teachers has not been explicitly described in the music therapy literature thus far, the experience of collaborating with Amelia inspired the consideration of this new scope of practice with teachers. This account highlights the possibilities for teachers to be supported with fostering their own self-care through taking part in a Music for Classroom Wellbeing Professional Learning Program.

It is suggested that the central notion of performativity within the music therapy practices used to support Amelia in this professional learning program aligns with a post humanist perspective that traversed exploration of “intra- and interpersonal processes as well as cultural and communal realms of experience” (Andsell & Stige, 2018, p. 180). Amelia’s descriptions of the way she had continued to share music after the end of the program highlighted possible sustained practices and benefits from this contextually sensitive professional learning program in which teachers were personally supported in community.

The end of Part Three of the story.

This part of the story has presented five ethnographic accounts pertaining to the way teachers’ engagement in Music for Classroom Wellbeing Professional Learning allowed them to grow through enriching musicality, developing their teaching practices, and fostering self-care. Providing personally tailored support within these three interconnected domains appeared to allow teachers to engage with the professional learning program depending on their personal level of teaching expertise. Within this program, teachers earlier in their career (Liz, Kafka and Jen) primarily chose to seek support with developing their teaching practices.

By contrast, the more experienced teacher participants (Justine, Kate and Amelia) were more open to seek support with enriching their musicality and fostering use of self-care practices.

This thesis continues with the final part of the story.

Part Four: Discussion and Implications of New Theoretical Understandings from this Research Project

The final story of this thesis presents the new theoretical understandings that emerged from this research project and a discussion of the implications of these findings on future practice. The chapters that make up this story are listed in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1

Chapters that Encompass Part Four: Discussion and Implications of New Theoretical Understandings from this Research Project

Chapter	Title
Chapter Nine	Discussion of Synthesised Findings from the Study of a Music Therapy Informed Professional Learning Program
Chapter Ten	Implications for Future Practice.
Chapter Eleven	A Reflexive Conclusion to the Research Project

Chapter Nine: Discussion of Synthesised Findings from the Study of a Music Therapy Informed Professional Learning Program.

Chapter introduction.

This chapter presents the findings from the meta-ethnographic synthesis conducted during the study of Music for Classroom Wellbeing Professional Learning. As previously mentioned, two metaphors emerged from this process to portray the relationship between music therapist and teachers within the Music for Classroom Wellbeing Professional Learning Program. These metaphors were viewing teacher as focus and music therapist as enabler of sharing. In keeping with the suggestion of Noblit and Hare (1988) to ascribe findings for a particular readership, the following chapter is intended for a practising music

therapist audience. The following section therefore presents these metaphors as principles that guided the practice of supporting teachers to grow within three interconnected domains. The relationship between teacher growth and strengthening of classroom wellbeing which appeared to transpire through this professional learning program is elucidated.

Synthesised findings.

Two overarching principles guided the practice of supporting teachers within this professional learning program; “focus on the teacher” and “enable sharing”. Through the use of these principles, teachers were supported to grow in the three interconnected domains of musicality, teaching practices and self-care. Growth in these domains then appeared to strengthen classroom wellbeing. A representation of the relationship between the guiding practice principles, interconnected domains of teacher growth, and strengthening of classroom wellbeing is presented in Figure 4.1.

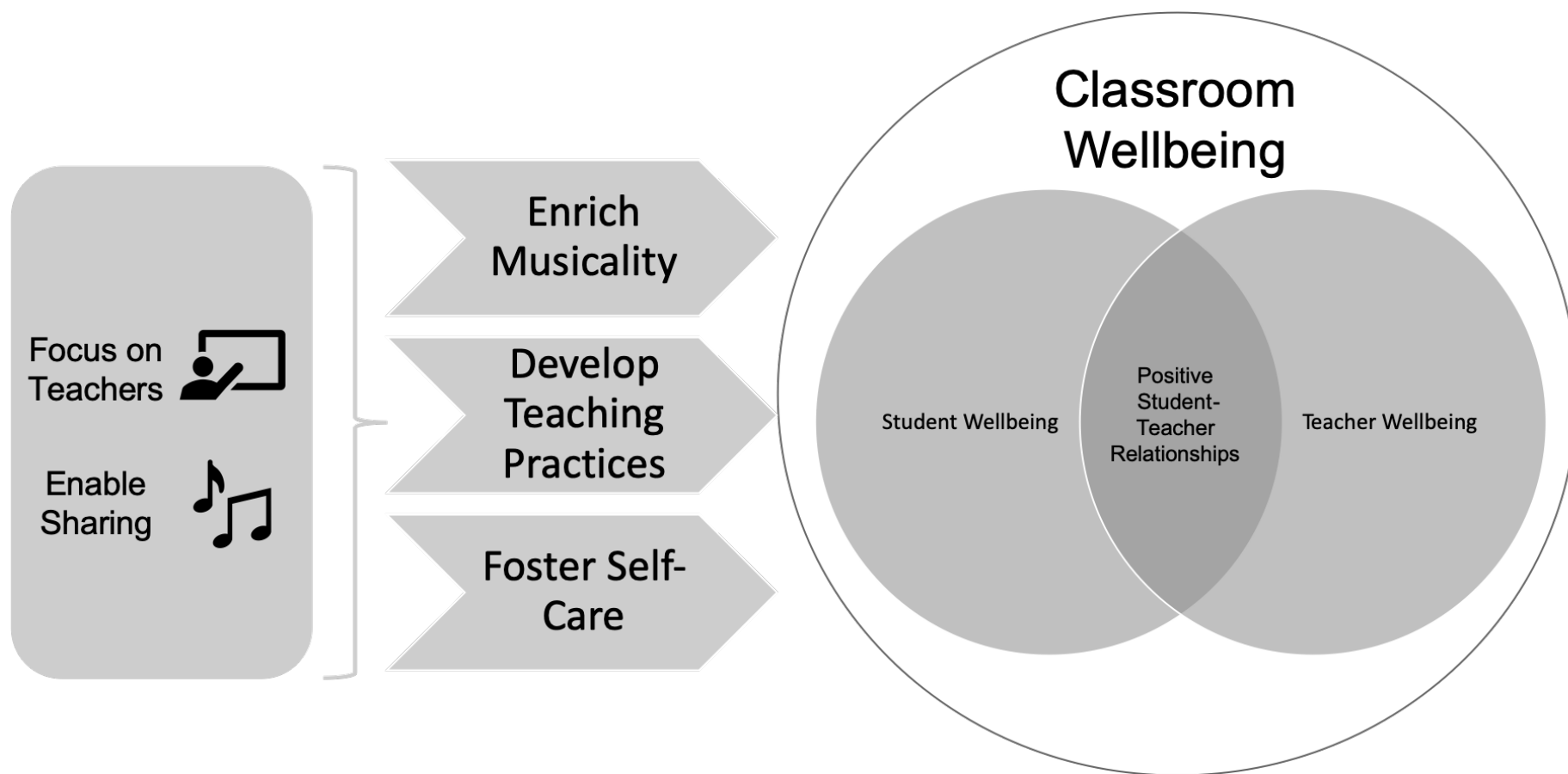


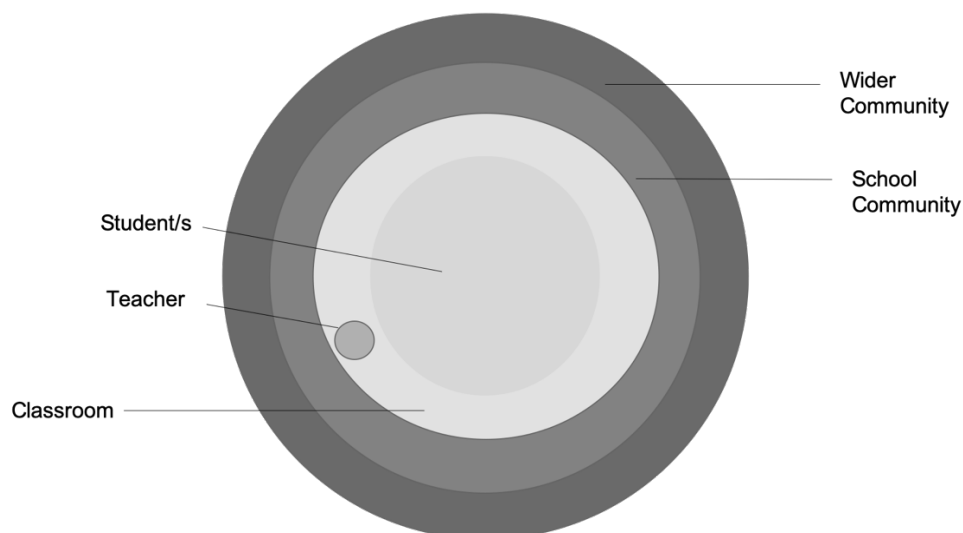
Figure 4.1 Relationship between guiding practice principles, interconnected domains of teacher growth and classroom wellbeing.

The music therapist uses the principles “focus on the teacher” and “enable sharing” to guide practice. This leads teachers to grow in three interconnected domains through enriching musicality, developing teaching practices, and fostering self-care. Classroom wellbeing is strengthened through improved student and teacher wellbeing and strengthened student-teacher relationships.

Principles that guided the practice of supporting teachers.

Focus on the teacher.

The first principle that guided the practice of supporting teachers was to “focus on the teacher”. As discussed in Chapter Two, music therapist teacher support programs have previously foregrounded student needs rather than the needs of the teachers involved. Traditionally, music therapy teacher support programs commence by identifying the needs of particular students, and subsequently addressing student needs through musical strategies. By contrast, findings from this study suggest that focusing directly on teachers was a valuable step towards supporting them in their classroom. This shift in focus is illustrated in Figure 4.2.



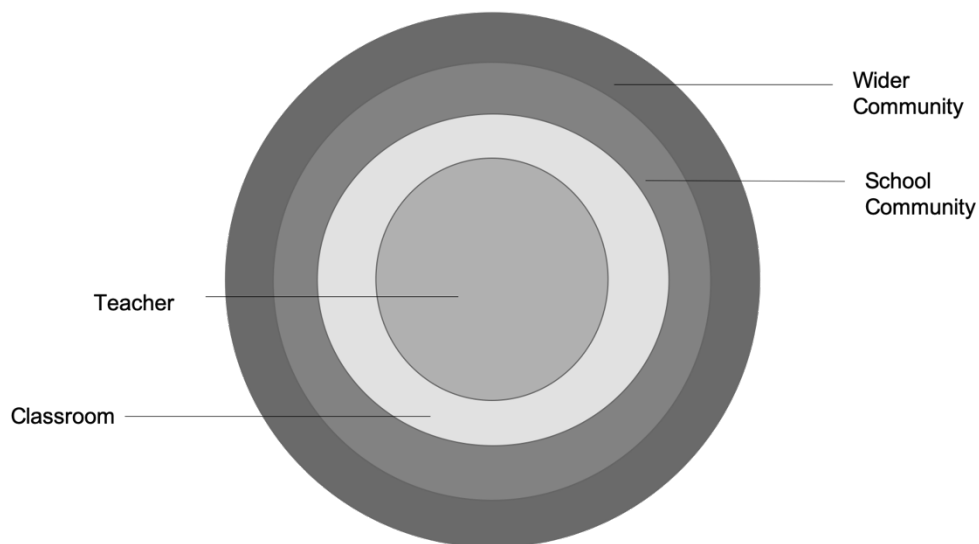


Figure 4.2 A comparative ecological view of traditional music therapist teacher support practice with student/s as focus (above) vs teacher as focus (below).

When facilitating this music therapist teacher support program, the musical, learning and wellbeing resources and needs of teachers were placed ahead of the resources and needs of students. Focusing on teachers within this professional learning program allowed teachers to be supported in a manner that was personalised to their own resources, needs and self-chosen learning intentions. This promoted teacher growth in three non-hierarchical and interconnected domains; musicality, teaching practices and self-care. Attempts were made to support teachers in a manner that aligned with their individual comfort and experience with music, teaching expertise, and openness to support with personal wellbeing. Examples of the use of teacher-focused practices to promote teacher growth are outlined in the following section.

Focusing on teachers to enrich musicality.

Teachers were supported to enrich their musicality throughout the program by developing confidence at playing and leveraging the affordances of music with their students. Consciously attempting to promote the enrichment of teachers' musicality was a noteworthy

discovery within this study and marks a departure from the focus on training teachers to develop skills at playing music to suit the needs of students identified in Chapter Two.

Each teacher was asked about their musical background and encouraged to set a learning intention related to building upon their current ability to use music in the classroom. I then worked with each teacher individually to plan and deliver classroom musical engagements in order to address student learning intentions related to the state Personal and Social Capability Curriculum Guidelines (Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority, 2016).

Next, regular planning time was attributed towards showing teachers how to build confidence at leveraging the affordances of music with their students. Teachers were assisted to prepare musical resources and implement them in their classroom practice dependent upon their musical abilities, their personal learning intention and the intention for student learning. Providing teachers the opportunity to enrich musicality through playing and singing related to their own musical preferences proved more successful than assisting teachers to develop musicality related to student preferred music.

Practice example

Kate expressed early in the professional learning program that she was interested in developing her skills at playing the keyboard so she could use it in her teaching. I initially showed Kate how to play the keyboard chords to accompany a children's nursery rhyme with lyrics adapted to promote students' emotional literacy. When Kate seemed disinterested and expressed that she was too busy to practice, I sent her a copy of a song by one of her favourite bands using the same chord progression. The following week I organised to hold a classroom "jam session" with Kate while her students were eating their lunch. I provided guidance on playing keyboard chords and augmented Kate's chordal keyboard playing and melodic singing through accompanying on guitar and singing harmonies. At the end of the

program, Kate shared that she had begun to attend fortnightly piano lessons after the conclusion of the program to continue to enrich her musicality.

Kate further expressed that the program had been beneficial:

...for my musicality, sort of helping me a bit with it too I think and just that confidence that I'm just going to pull out the keyboard, doesn't matter what happens, and the kids don't care [what it sounds like].

She also explained that “it makes me feel good when I use music, and I’m excited to do it, and the kids look forward to it too.” The experience of Kate illustrated the potential of strengthening classroom wellbeing through enriching teachers’ ability to initiate musical activities that make teachers and students feel good.

Focusing on teachers to develop teaching practices.

Other teachers, (typically those early in their career as educators), were supported to develop their teaching practices. Supporting teachers according to teacher practice standards is yet to be described in the music therapy literature base. This finding thus marks a change from previous music therapist teacher support programs in that the development of teacher pedagogical abilities was perceived as a valuable sustained outcome from the program, even if the teacher did not retain enhanced skills at using music in the classroom themselves.

Each teacher was encouraged to set a learning intention for their growth according to the national standards of teaching practice (AITSL, 2017). Musical engagement was then used with teachers and their students as a means of demonstrating pedagogical practices that were implicitly inclusive and engaging. Demonstrating such practices served as a starting point for supporting the burgeoning ability of early career teachers to reflect on their classroom practices in general.

Practice example

Jen expressed a wish to receive support related to the implementation of “inclusive and positive interactions to engage and support all students in classroom activities” (AITSL, 2017, p. standard 1 (proficient teacher)). Focusing on Jen’s preference for organisation and structure allowed me to support her to develop teaching practices in a manner that was personally tailored. For example, Jen used her expertise as a teacher to identify an aspect of the Personal and Social Capability Curriculum Guidelines that she wanted to work on with her students. I used my expertise as a music therapist to suggest that we address this learning intention through an activity where students were asked to create group improvisations on percussion instruments. Throughout the program we communicated weekly via email to update the plan depending upon where the students were in their learning. I also visited Jen’s classroom at the beginning of the day to clarify our roles for the upcoming session. I noticed that Jen was quick to learn through modelling, so often began sessions by illustrating the musical activity before handing over leadership to Jen.

The percussion improvisation activity involved several pedagogical features that differed from Jen’s usual teaching practice, such as seating students in a circle on the floor rather than at individual desks. Students were also encouraged to participate in the same activity to their own ability rather than providing separate activities for groups of students dependent on student learning need as was usually the case in Jen’s classroom. Another point of difference from Jen’s typical teaching practice was the noisy participation of the students. This contrasted greatly to the usually quiet classroom atmosphere in Jen’s grade.

Jen commented at the end of the program that:

There definitely has been changes in my approach because prior to this I wouldn’t play music while the kids are working... my professional [practice] development has improved because now I’m, you know, I’ve got more tools you know on my tool belt.

Jen also expressed that next term “the kids are going to make their own African instruments, and then again come together and work in a team and produce music with their own instruments that they have actually made”. These comments were indicative of development in Jen’s teaching practices, as she had not previously used such creative and inclusive pedagogies within her classroom. It is argued that through developing her teaching practices, Jen had also contributed towards strengthening the wellbeing of her students in the classroom through responding to their individual needs.

Focusing on teachers to foster self-care.

Openly questioning teachers about their personal wellbeing served as an important aspect of teacher support. Every interaction with teachers began with asking the teacher how they were feeling, and on many occasions, teachers confided that they were feeling tired, stressed, flat or overwhelmed. On these occasions, rather than launching into planning for musical engagements with students, teachers were offered the chance to take part in music making as a form of self-care. Providing teachers with musically-oriented care during the program appeared to assist some teachers to re-establish their personal connection to music and foster musical self-care practices in their own everyday life beyond the program.

Practice example

Upon arriving at experienced teacher Amelia’s classroom one day to plan for the upcoming musical engagement with students, Amelia admitted that she felt flat. Instead of making plans for the class band we spent the morning singing “You are my sunshine” (Taylor & Spivey, 1939) (a favourite song of Amelia’s) with myself accompanying on guitar. I then used music therapy methods outlined by F. Baker (2015, p. 101) to assist Amelia to write a song parody to “You are my Sunshine”. Amelia then taught the song to her students, explaining that she had originally learned it from her grandfather. While this went against my

inclination to use age appropriate student preferred music, Amelia's pupils appeared thrilled to learn a song that their teacher had learnt from her grandfather. As I left the classroom, Amelia turned to me and said, "now I feel happy, ready for the day, thanks, that was fun".

On another occasion, upon arrival at the classroom I noticed that again Amelia's energy seemed low. I asked her about her favourite song. While Amelia began setting up for the upcoming lesson, I began playing and quietly singing the song, Lou Reed's "Perfect Day". Amelia came over to where I was and took over singing. She was still singing when her students arrived for the day. Inspired by her participation in the program, Amelia joined a weekly community singing group. Amelia also initiated music listening with her adult children and husband every Sunday evening as they ate dinner together. When presenting to her colleagues at a whole school staff meeting Amelia commented on her use of music to foster self-care by stating:

...and I sort of honed back into listening to music, it gives me that uplifting feeling and makes me feel good in myself and I think over the years I've sort of lost that a bit so the program has sort of helped me pick up on "oh, ok this is how music makes ME feel", and so I've made a greater connection of giving myself opportunities of actually listening to music, to stop and to listen.

Amelia continued by explaining that her newfound musical self-care practices were: helping me to deal with my stress, and I think that my performance as a teacher has improved over that period as well, 'cos I'm just a lot calmer about things and not letting the little things get to me.

These comments allude to the relationship between Amelia's own musical self-care practices and her personal wellbeing in the classroom and illustrate new possible avenues for contributing towards classroom wellbeing.

Enable sharing.

The second principle that guided the practice of supporting teachers was to “enable sharing”. Findings from this project positioned the music therapist as “enabler”. One participant described my style of facilitation throughout the program as “coming in and just gently leading us on and showing us, planting seeds”. Viewing the program facilitator as “enabler” contrasts with the “expert” role of the consultant, coach or mentor often described in literature pertaining to previous teacher support programs. Within this professional learning program, working to enable sharing served to empower teachers and highlight their agency in contributing to positive change within their own classroom. Furthermore, enabling sharing within this professional learning program appeared to support teachers to counter traditional practices within their own school context.

Throughout the program, I consciously sought to create opportunities to enable sharing between myself, the teachers and their students. In addition to providing opportunities to share music together, the professional learning program also opened up space for teachers to share pedagogical knowledge among one another. Furthermore, by drawing upon my therapeutic skills, I enabled teachers to speak freely about their personal wellbeing with myself, colleagues and their students. This allowed teachers to share aspects of their personal self in ways that differed from their usual teacher identity. Working to enable sharing aligns with previous understandings of community music therapist, in which the role of music therapist has been viewed as intending “to assist people to find or re-find connection, companionship and community through mostly musical means” (Andsell and Pavlicevic, 2005, in Andsell & DeNora, 2014, p. 143). Additionally, when outlining the various theoretical orientations of music therapists working in schools, McFerran (2014) presents the idea that the ecologically oriented music therapist intends to foster connections (p.330).

The “ripple effect” has been presented in the community music therapy literature as a possible outcome from ecologically oriented community music therapy work, in which “music naturally *radiates*” [original emphasis] (Pavlicevic & Andsell, 2004, p. 16). Sharing in diverse ways within the professional learning program appeared to contribute to a further ripple of new ways of sharing beyond the program. This occurred through the ways in which teachers continued to share with colleagues, students, family members and the wider community after the professional learning program had ended. The sharing that transpired beyond the professional learning program then served to help embed music into the school culture, a crucial factor in building program sustainability described in the community music therapy school literature (Bolger & McFerran, 2013; Rickson & McFerran, 2014). The following Figure 4.3 depicts sustained sharing that remains after the Music for Wellbeing Professional Learning Program has ended. The music therapist is no longer centralised and has returned to her place in the wider community. However, the professional learning community remains connected through music, and each teacher continues to share music and more within and beyond their own classroom context.

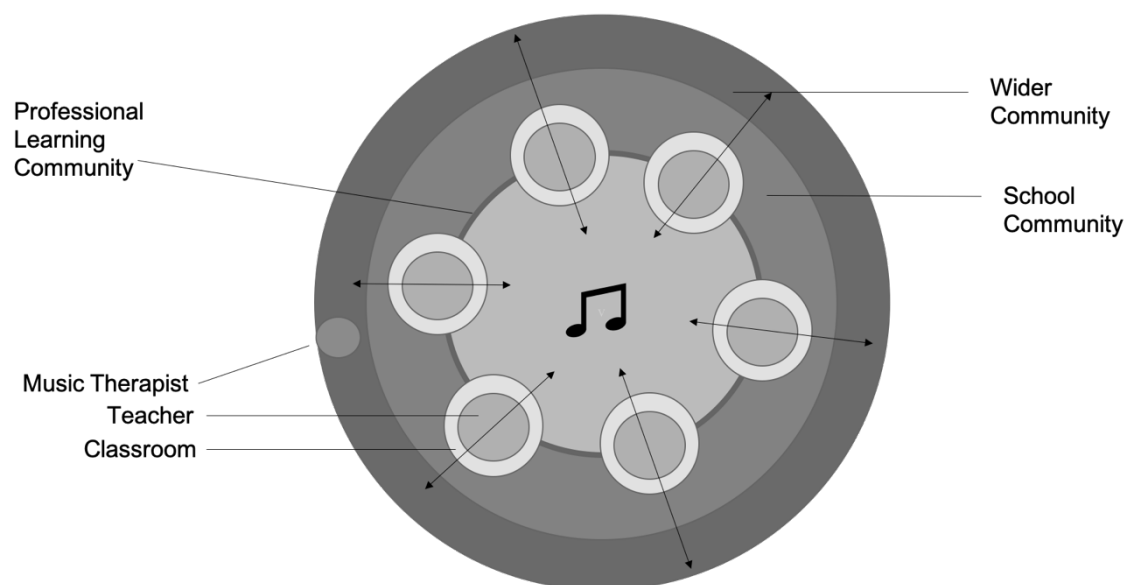


Figure 4.3 Sustained sharing after the Music for Wellbeing Professional Learning Program.

After the program had ceased, the music therapist is no longer present within the school community however, the professional learning community remains connected through music. Each teacher also continues to share in diverse ways within and beyond their own classroom context.

Enabling sharing to enrich musicality.

Enabling the sharing of music supported teachers to enrich their musicality through developing their comfort with engaging musically in the classroom. In particular, sharing music in the classroom appeared to support the healthy performance of positive relationships between teachers and students, a key intention of a community music therapy oriented approach to practice (Stige & Aarø, 2011, p. 22). The six participating teachers were also enabled to share music as part of fortnightly professional learning community meetings to promote familiarity with music making activities and discuss examples of classroom musical practices.

Practice example

Justine had a simple yet effective existing classroom music practice at the beginning of the program. Each day she played one student preferred ‘happy song’ on the interactive whiteboard after recess. While Justine encouraged her students to dance and sing along, she was not comfortable dancing in the classroom and elected to keep a boundary between herself and her students.

Over the course of the program, I spent time in Justine’s classroom supporting her to build on the happy song activity. Each week I made a point of joining in a little more with the happy song and telling Justine about the value I could see in this musical activity. I also set up the opportunity for Justine to describe the happy song activity with her colleagues in the professional learning community. In the final week of the program, with the encouragement of her students and myself, Justine joined her students to sing and dance in a circle during

happy time. Justine later described that through building the confidence to let her guard down with her students, she had noticed an improvement in their relationship:

I've always had a really good relationship with these kids but I think that my relationship has improved with them [through the program], I think that they've seen me in a different light and yeah we've had a lot of fun together doing it yeah just that different level of our relationship like um even joining in and singing you know they saw me as just, I wasn't Mrs [surname], I was just, I hope that that was what they saw, that we were all just one, rather than me and them.

Justine also expressed delight that the sound of other teachers using the 'happy song' practice to share music with their own students had begun emanating from classrooms across the school. She stated: "Perhaps I've convinced others that letting your hair down for a couple of minutes in a day/week is not only therapeutic for the students but for us teachers too". The example of Justine has elucidated the potential of assisting teachers to strengthen classroom relationships through promoting their comfort with the use of targeted musical activities in order to promote classroom wellbeing. Furthermore, enabling teachers like Justine to share such musical practices among one another further served to sustain the use of musical practices within the school after the conclusion of the program.

Enabling sharing to develop teaching practices.

Teachers were enabled to share knowledge about the use of inclusive, engaging and reflexive pedagogies through the program. This occurred by sharing knowledge about using music with teachers from my own professional expertise during individual planning sessions. In addition, I also set up opportunities for teachers to share knowledge with their colleagues through fortnightly professional learning community meetings. Towards the end of the program, I organised for the teachers to publicly share ideas and processes for musically engaging with students at a whole school staff meeting. This opportunity for teachers to share

aspects of the program with their colleagues served to spread the practice of music making across the school.

Practice example

Teachers in the early years of their career as educators were particularly eager to gain support with developing their teaching practices. Kafka, a gigging musician trained in music and drama, participated in the professional learning program during his first year as classroom primary teacher. Rather than developing his (already exemplary) personal musical skills, Kafka's engagement within the professional program focused on learning to leverage the affordances of music in order to develop his classroom practices. This involved meeting over lunchtime to reflect on the use of musical elements within songs I led with students. I also worked with Kafka to write simple chants to assist his students to transition from one activity to another. Kafka expressed his gratitude at learning how to *use* music rather than teach music in his classroom, expressing that the program was:

... about how can we use music to improve your teaching or to enhance it. So, it wasn't just like changing something or telling you how to do something. It was, like, you're already doing something, how can we use music to support that?

Kafka also vulnerably shared his challenges at learning to use his own strength as a musician to help with managing his classroom in front of the whole staff at their after school meeting. This was significant as teachers at this school did not traditionally speak out in front of other staff members about their own challenges as educators. Kafka was subsequently praised by the school principal for his openness during the staff meeting presentation. In praising Kafka, the principal of this school demonstrated his support for teachers to continue to use music as a means of responding to the needs of individual students. After the professional learning program had ceased and I was no longer at the school, other teachers

began asking Kafka for assistance with their own musical skills so they could also “use” music as part of their classroom practices.

Enabling sharing to foster self-care.

Setting up opportunities to enable sharing of music within the professional learning program appeared to promote teachers’ comfort at sharing their personal self through being vulnerable and open with myself, students, and colleagues. It appeared that engaging in music making provided teachers with the opportunity to show their personal side and receive some much needed support. This, in turn, encouraged them to foster self-care.

Practice example

Liz adapted the lyrics to a popular song in order to teach her students about managing stress. When attempting to play guitar and sing the song with her students, I noticed that Liz was having difficulty. I quietly encouraged Liz to share her own frustration at the difficulty of learning guitar. Liz immediately caught on and told her students “it’s too hard Meg, I’m giving up!” Her enthralled prep students responded to Liz’s apparent frustration by raising their hands and giving their teacher suggestions not to give up and to take a deep breath. Liz later articulated that through participating in the professional learning program she had become more aware of her own emotions in the classroom, sharing that “...it allowed me to become more in touch with my own emotions too and recognise that right now I’m feeling this, what can I do to kind of change that?” Liz began playing personally preferred recorded music in her classroom before the start of the school day to put her in a good mood before the students’ arrival. She also spoke of the way she had begun playing calming music during writing activities to calm students and “change the dynamic of the lesson”. Authors writing about emotional literacy education explain that teachers need to have skills at naming and responding to their own emotions before they are able to do so with their students (Hagelskamp, Brackett, Rivers, & Salovey, 2013). Liz’s ability to use musical self-care

practices to address her own emotions in the classroom, as well as the emotions of her students was indicative of her growing ability to intentionally strengthen classroom wellbeing.

Chapter conclusion.

This chapter has presented the new theoretical understandings about new approaches for music therapists working with teachers that emerged from this study. Music for Classroom Wellbeing Professional Learning was a teacher-focused process that enabled sharing of music, knowledge and the personal across school communities. Sustained practices and benefits that resulted from the implementation of this professional learning program are consistent with community music therapy practice that emphasises the building of flourishing and inclusive communities through music (Rickson & McFerran, 2014). Through actively participating in the program teachers were supported to enrich musicality, develop inclusive, engaging and reflexive teaching practices, and foster self-care. Within this professional learning program, teachers were enabled to counter traditional practices and share music, knowledge and the personal within and beyond the school community. In doing so, teachers strengthened classroom wellbeing and sustained the practice of sharing within and beyond their classroom context.

Shifting the intent behind music therapist teacher support programs from aiming to teach school staff members to develop skills at using music with their students towards promoting opportunities to enable sharing has wide implications for future music therapy work in schools. Providing support to teachers through enabling sharing of music, pedagogical knowledge and the personal is a new and exciting way of considering how a music therapist may help in the current performance driven school system. Crooke (2017) argues that for the psychosocial benefits of school music programs to be realised, educational policy documents need to value the subjective wellbeing of students in and of itself. It is

further suggested that supporting teachers to improve their own subjective wellbeing is also of immense value in the current educational climate. The concept of “classroom wellbeing” that emerged from this study to portray the interrelated nature of teacher and student wellbeing is worthy of further inquiry. When developing teacher wellbeing takes place alongside classroom musical engagements that promote inclusive, engaging teaching practices and the healthy performance of relationships, both students and their teachers stand to benefit. This thesis continues with a discussion of the implications of these findings for future music therapy practice and training.

Chapter Ten: Implications for Future Practice.

Chapter introduction.

In this chapter I articulate the wider implications of the synthesised findings (summarised in Figure 4.1 in the previous chapter), from this study for the future practice of music therapy within and beyond educational settings. As described in the introductory chapter, the aim of this research project was to explore possibilities for music therapist teacher support programs. To address this aim I conducted an ethnographically informed study of a Music for Classroom Wellbeing Professional Learning with six participating classroom teachers. Through conducting a meta-ethnographic synthesis of five ethnographic accounts of the professional learning program, two metaphors emerged to portray the roles and relationships between myself as program facilitator, and the teachers engaging in professional learning. These metaphors were viewing “music therapist as enabler of sharing”, and “teacher as focus”. Further discussion of the implications of these metaphors within this chapter intends to provoke new ways of considering music therapist led support programs, both within schools as well as other settings.

This chapter is split into two sections. Firstly, I explore implications from this project for the practice of music therapy by offering recommendations for future music therapist support models of practice. Secondly, I aim to further position myself as an “enabler of sharing” by describing possibilities for future music therapist and teacher professional learning programs that have emerged from this study. Recommendations are made for the ongoing professional learning of music therapists through continuing professional learning and training courses.

Implications as “provocations”.

Any consideration of the potential future implications of research benefits from critical reflection on the bounds and limitations of the research project itself. It is noted at this

juncture that the findings of this research project emerged out of the ethnographically informed exploration of one Music for Classroom Wellbeing Professional Learning Program. This program took place in one school, with six teacher participants, conducted from the position of a single scholar-practitioner. As such, there is no suggestion that any of the findings from this research project are generalisable to other teachers, music therapists, schools, contexts or professional learning programs that may be conducted in the future. However, it is envisaged that the findings of this single study may inform future research and practice.

When considering the implications of this study, I explored approaches to motivating change in other disciplinary areas. One article that resonated with this intention described next steps for the field of critical disability studies. Within this article, authors Goodley, Lawthom, Liddiard, and Runswick-Cole (2019) pose five questions as “provocations” intended to “encourage reflection and debate” (p.972). In keeping with this approach, a discussion of the wider implications of the findings of this study within this chapter is intended to offer responses to a series of seven provocative questions. These provocations are proposed to elicit further reflection and dialogue about the practice of music therapy and education within various contextual spheres. In particular, it is hoped that this chapter might spark future conversation within the music therapy profession about the person or people who are the intended focus for the music therapy. It is further expected that these questions encourage consideration of how the focus person’s needs are perceived, as well as offer new ways of thinking about the role of the music therapist.

Shifting the focus: Implications for music therapist support practice models.

Provocation 1: Who is the intended focus of music therapist support programs?

Within this research project, using a lens informed by ecological systems theory to explore the relationships between elements of Music for Classroom Wellbeing Professional

Learning Program allowed new ways of identifying the focus of the music therapist teacher support program. As identified in Chapter Two, in publications describing traditional music therapist teacher support programs, the music therapist tended to focus on the student or group of students and their identified additional needs. By contrast, facilitating a teacher-focused professional learning program within this study necessitated making a conceptual shift to view the teacher/s in their context as the focus of the music therapist.

It is proposed that becoming clear about the intended focus of the music therapy program was an important precursor to the delivery of the professional learning program. Within this program, the shift in focus from students to teachers lead to the development of knowledge about each of the six participating teachers in their professional context. This in turn inspired further use of teacher-focused practices. Ultimately, it is argued that focusing on teachers appeared to contribute greatly to the teacher growth and classroom wellbeing that ensued from the program.

One potentially contentious issue that arose from focusing on teachers within this project was the use of an educative frame. It is reiterated that through the use of an educative frame within this study it is not suggested that therapeutically framed music therapy programs do not have a vital place in the range of educational contexts in which teachers work. Nor is a dichotomous relationship between therapeutically and educationally framed goals, or the needs of students and teachers inferred. Rather, an educative frame was used to respond to the notion that by focusing more attention on the professional obligations of teachers to educate students, both teachers *and* their students would stand to benefit.

It is suggested that this finding may also be applied to models of music therapist support practice in wide-ranging professional and personal contexts in which a music therapist is striving to support others to sustain benefits and activities without the music therapist present. For example, in addition to publications describing music therapist teacher

support programs (as presented within Chapter Two), there is a growing body of literature describing music therapist support programs in various other contexts. In addition to schools, music therapists have described supporting other professionals such as early childhood educators (Kern & Aldridge, 2006; Register, 2004) and with allied health professionals in transdisciplinary practice teams (Twyford & Watson, 2008).

Moreover, a burgeoning field of practice involves music therapists working to support the ability of caregivers to use music with others within the domain of their personal relationships. For example, music therapists have been described to assist parents and caregivers to support children with autism (Thompson, Shanahan, & Gordon, 2019), hospitalised with cancer (Robb et al., 2016), or people living with dementia (F. A. Baker, Stretton-Smith, Clark, Tamplin, & Lee, 2018; Hanser, Butterfield-Whitcomb, Kawata, & Collins, 2011).

Several other terms (including mentoring, coaching, skill sharing, training and collaboration with the intention of skill building) are used to describe music therapy practices in which the intention is to develop the practices of others without the music therapist present. However, for the purposes of this thesis use of these practices are referred to as music therapist professional and caregiver support programs. The findings of this study suggest that shifting the focus of such programs toward the person who is intended to develop new ways of being and doing (i.e. the professional or caregiver) is advised. Having a clear focus may then in turn allow the music therapist to develop rich understandings of that person and their resources and needs in context and guide the use of suitable music therapy practices. This may subsequently increase the possibility of sustained activities and benefits when the music therapist is not present. Enacting this shift of focus is in keeping with an ecological approach to community music therapy practice in which the contextually sensitive music therapist considers different “ports of entry” (Stige, 2002, p. 170) for engaging in practice.

Provocation 2: What expertise is required for music therapists engaging in professional and caregiver focused practices?

This study has illuminated a shift in understandings of the expertise required for engaging in music therapist professional and caregiver support models of practice from earlier descriptions in the music therapy literature base. When writing about music therapy consultation in schools, Rickson (2012) has previously argued that “The primary activity in music therapy consultation of empowering adults to work with students is a complex endeavour” (p. 280). Rickson continued to express that working as a consultant in schools requires a high level of expertise as a music therapy practitioner. This is understandable as music therapy consultation programs such as Rickson’s aimed to provide teachers with musical skills they could use with their students. However, findings from this study suggest that all trained and registered music therapists could be expected to have the necessary expertise for facilitating music therapist professional and caregiver support programs. This is because shifting the focus to supporting the needs of professionals and caregivers recognises the consultee or caregiver as holding the expertise at addressing the needs of the care recipients they intend to support. For example, within this study, expertise at using music therapy practices allowed me to focus my attention on using these practices to support the needs of the teachers. Teachers (with practice expertise teaching) could then in turn focus on their students. This insight is reflected in Figure 4.4.

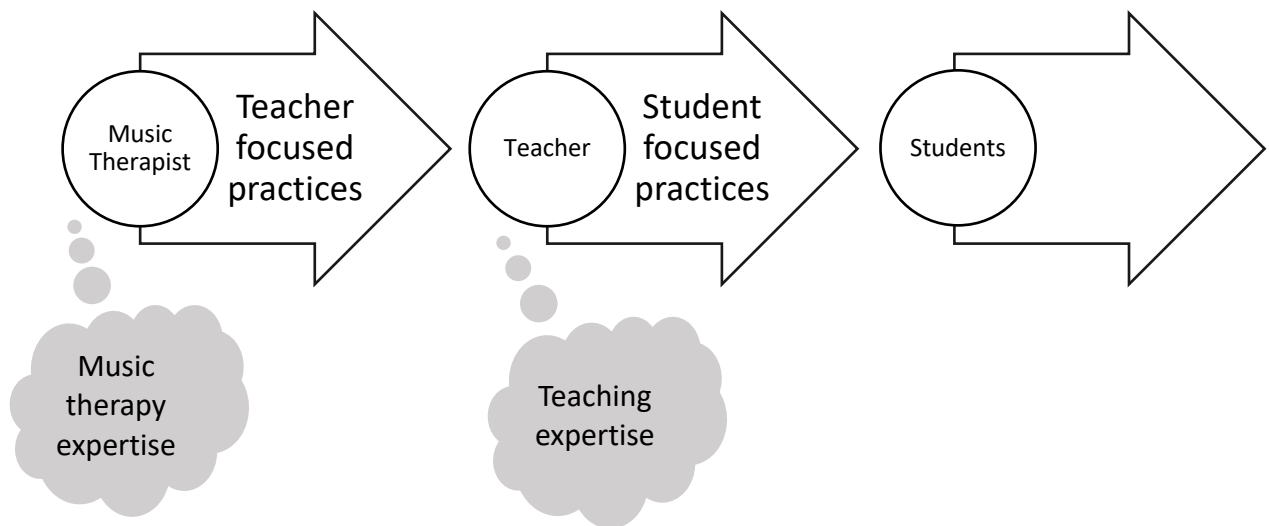


Figure 4.4 Music therapist teacher support.

Figure 4.4 shows a representation of the teacher support practice within the Music for Classroom Wellbeing Professional Learning Program. In this process, myself as music therapist (with music therapy practice expertise) focused on teachers, and teachers (with teaching expertise) focused on students. As illustrated in Figures 4.5 and 4.6, this insight may be applied to music therapists wishing to engage in any music therapist professional or personal caregiver support programs.

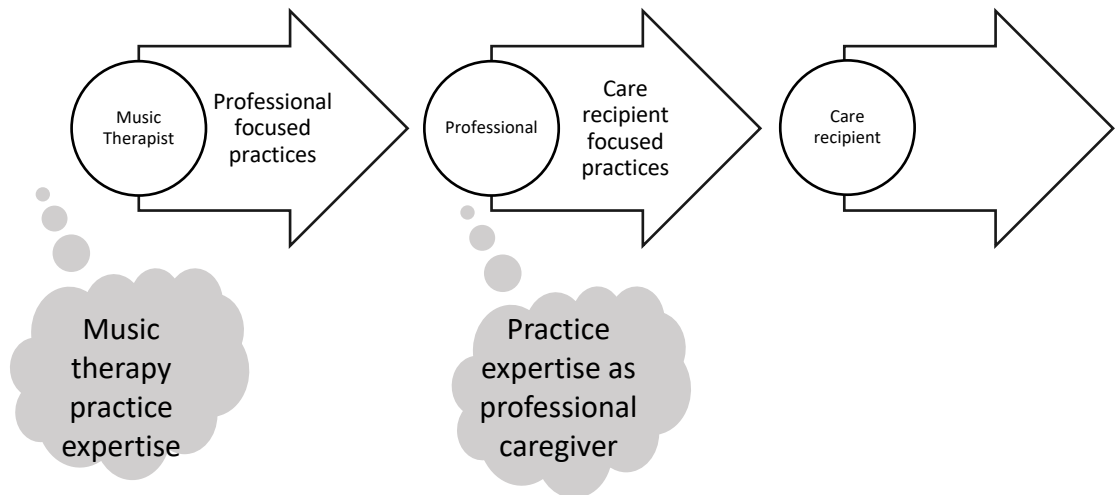


Figure 4.5 Music therapist professional support.

Figure 4.5 shows a representation of music therapist professional support practice in which music therapist (with music therapy practise expertise) focuses on the professional, and the professional (with practice expertise as professional caregiver) focuses on the care recipient.

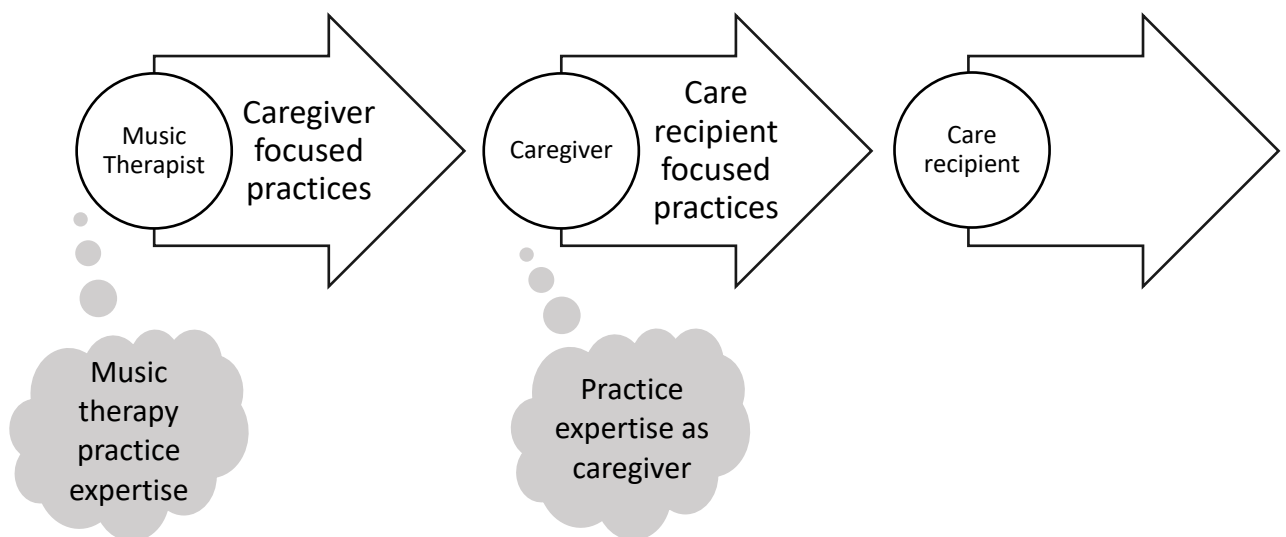


Figure 4.6 Music therapist caregiver support.

Figure 4.6 provides a representation of music therapist caregiver support practice in which music therapist (with music therapy practice expertise) focuses on the caregiver, and caregiver (with practice expertise as caregiver) focus on the care recipient.

As previously mentioned, it is contended that all music therapists are well placed to facilitate music therapist professional and caregiver support programs, including a Music for Classroom Wellbeing Professional Learning Program such as the one described in this thesis. However, this is not to suggest that the music therapist implementing such a program would not benefit from developing their knowledge about the particular educational and school context to maximise the likelihood of program success. Indeed, many contemporary schools of thought would consider developing a deep contextual understanding in order to frame a music therapy program best practice. Furthermore, it is not intended to imply that music therapists with dual qualifications in music therapy and education would not be particularly well placed to facilitate such a program. Rather, the findings of this study highlight the ways in which, no matter the frame of the music therapy program, nor the context, core competencies of a music therapist may be used to connect through music and contribute to positive and sustained program outcomes.

Provocation 3: What can be addressed through music therapist professional and caregiver support programs?

The next major implication from this study for the practice of music therapy relates to a potential for broadening of the scope of music therapy practice to align with the new ways of conceptualising music therapist professional and caregiver support models presented above. Music therapy practice has historically been described as the use of music to address the needs of the people engaging with the music therapist towards greater health and wellbeing (Davis & Hadley). These needs have traditionally been characterised as related to

the personal domain. Music therapists have thus tend to address the social, communication, emotional, physical, cognitive, sensory and spiritual needs of the individual or group (B. L. Wheeler, 2015). However, as previously described, new boundaries for the work of music therapists are described to be needed to ensure the sustainability for the profession (Pavlicevic & Fouché, 2014). The discoveries from this PhD project suggest that through applying the guiding practice principles described in the previous chapter, music therapists are also well placed to support people in their place of work through addressing their professional needs.

It is further proposed that music therapists wishing to address the needs of professionals may benefit from drawing upon models of professional learning from the field of education. In particular, aligning with the work of authors who position professional learning as a process where teachers develop their teacher identity (Jennings et al., 2017; McKay, 2019; Mockler, 2013) is advised. From this standpoint, an individuals' professional needs are viewed as inseparable from their personal needs. As such, the practice of supporting an individual with their professional needs through the use of music would also include addressing personal needs, such as the fostering of self-care practices that took place within this study.

An expanded definition of music therapy that includes “professional needs” is not recommended. Rather, the understanding of music therapy practice that has emerged from this project aligns with a more contemporary definition of music therapy. Within this contemporary definition of music therapy, “music is used to actively support people as they strive to improve their health, functioning and wellbeing” (Australian Music Therapy Association, 2019), whatever their needs may be.

Viewing music therapy practice with such an expanded understanding is also applicable to addressing the needs of communities in context as per community music

therapy practice. It is therefore advised that a deep level of contextual knowledge about the particular needs of the stakeholders that make up the community is required. Developing extensive contextual knowledge of the needs of stakeholders within the community is in turn likely to improve the possibility of community members sustaining activities and benefits when the music therapist is not present. The identification of the differing needs of key stakeholders in a school community (including school leadership, students, teachers and parents) is an important initial step in directing discussions about successfully implementing a sustainable school arts program. This insight has already been incorporated into a decision-making matrix for school leaders wishing to implement school arts programs as part of the wider research project that inspired this PhD study (McFerran, Hattie, McPherson, Crooke, & Steele, 2019). Music therapists wishing to engage in community music therapy informed programs that ultimately contribute towards sustained activities and benefits are encouraged to begin by identifying the specific needs of different stakeholders within the community. The music therapist may then focus their use of practices on the needs of a particular group of stakeholders. Teachers were chosen as the focus of this project as they have been identified as playing a central role in sustaining the majority of activities and benefits of school arts programs (McFerran, Crooke, & Hattie, 2017).

One potential challenge for future research and practice in this sphere relates to navigating the difficulty of offering a music therapy program within an educational framework. Within this particular study, I sidestepped potential resistance or challenge from teachers and management staff through framing the program as a music therapist teacher support program, rather than music therapy per se. However, the downside of this decision was that any future new scope of practice that emerge from this research project are tied to music therapists, rather than the profession of music therapy as a whole. While exciting avenues for future cross-disciplinary collaboration abound from working in this manner, such

an approach may unintentionally impact upon efforts to advocate for music therapy as a stand-alone profession.

Implications of viewing music therapists as “enablers of sharing”.

Provocation 4: How can music therapists support others to counter dominant practices?

As outlined in Chapter Four, a key metaphor that emerged from the process of conducting a meta-ethnographic synthesis of the accounts of Music for Classroom Wellbeing Professional Learning Program with teachers was viewing the “music therapist as enabler of sharing”. This finding offers new ways of thinking about what a music therapist may offer when positioned as an enabler within their own practice context. Viewing music therapist as enabler has resonance with the inclusive education literature, in which factors that support the full inclusion and active membership of all students in a given activity are often referred to as enablers (Reupert, Deppeler, & Sharma, 2015; Simui, Kasonde-Ngandu, Cheyeka, Simwinga, & Ndhlovu, 2018). The conceptualisation of music therapist as enabler further intersects with post-ableist music therapy in which “a key indicator of MT success is the *removal of barriers* that limit success: including how success is framed and what it can be” (Shaw, 2019, p. 200). It is submitted that through embodying the position of enabler, music therapists may have the potential to support others to counter dis-abling practices within their place of work. This occurs not only through their use of music to foster sharing, connection and valuing of diversity but also through supporting others to enact new ways of being that counter the hegemonic norm. Within this study, positioning as an enabler of sharing supported teachers to develop their use of practices that both upheld inclusive education legislation and countered dominant neoliberal educational practices. Furthermore, conscious attempts have been made to ensure that descriptions about the particular needs of students were not prominent within this thesis even though there were many students who had a diagnosis of

disability within this project. This served to emphasise descriptions of the use of practices that included all students in the teachers' classrooms.

Furthermore, within this professional learning program the act of “sharing” in itself also served to counter the use of hegemonic educational practices that aligned with an individualistic and capitalist agenda. Sharing of music, knowledge and the personal thus served to counter the educational paradigm in which there were expectations of right and wrong ways to be in a school. Within this professional learning program, sharing served to counter this paradigm through such varied acts as:

- blurring the boundaries between students and teachers in the classroom
- problematising the notion that teacher was expert, and couldn't express vulnerability or personal self and
- challenging the belief that there were correct and incurred ways to participate in music making.

While the phrase “music therapist as enabler of sharing” was borne out of this particular study, it is recognised that previous music therapy authors have described working in a manner that align with such a conceptualisation of the music therapist. An example of aligned music therapist teacher support practice is presented by McFerran et al. (2015) in their description of a music therapy program with staff and students at a school for students with autism. In this publication, the authors outline the ways in which the music therapist sought to encourage teachers to share both music with their students and ideas among one another. They reported that a significant outcome of the program was a shift in the manner in which teachers built relationships with their students. This finding is reflective of the assertion that using practices that enable sharing appeared to contribute to enriched classroom relationships presented in this thesis. McFerran et. al (2015) alert to a shift in intentions for music therapist teacher support programs from striving to teach musical skills, to leveraging

the affordances of music as a connector of people. The findings of this study extend upon this concept by highlighting the immense potential of music therapists bringing about systemic change through supporting other professionals and caregivers in this manner. It is suggested that viewing music therapist as enabler of sharing paves a path for varied discourses of critical and activist approaches to music therapy practices (Baines, 2013; Curtis, 2012; Hadley, 2013; Rolvsjord, 2010; Scrine & McFerran, 2018)⁶ to enter the realm of music therapist professional and caregiver support models of practice. Through positioning as enabler of sharing, music therapists have the potential to support others to counter hegemonic practices in their own practice context. Future exploration of activist and critical models of professional and caregiver support models of music therapy practice is needed.

Provocation 5: What might be sustained? Expanding expectations of the possible activities and benefits of music therapist professional and caregiver support programs.

An implicit feature of positioning as an “enabler of sharing” within the Music for Classroom Wellbeing Professional Learning Program was that it was impossible to determine what outcomes would be sustained from teachers’ engagement within the program. This feature is reflected in the non-measurable nature of the interconnected domains of teacher growth that arose from the professional learning program (presented within the Chapter Six, Seven and Eight Ethnographic Accounts). Furthermore, the non-measurable ways in which teachers were supported within this program is intended to align with the Deweyan inspired critical pragmatist philosophical perspective of this research project outlined in Chapter Four that understands education as growth.

Six months after the completion of this professional learning program alone, teachers reported diverse sustained outcomes in both their classroom practice as well as the use of

⁶ This is not intended to be an extensive list of all the activist and critical approaches to music therapy practices that exist; rather I offer the names of authors who have been instrumental in developing my own critical and activist stance as a music therapist.

music in their personal lives. Yet, it is proposed that a strength of working as enabler of sharing was that this allowed teachers to sustain outcomes from their engagement in the professional learning program in ways that could not be foreplanned or measured. Providing ongoing support would undoubtedly have contributed towards teachers' ability to continue to use the teaching, musical and self-care practices gained through their engagement in the professional learning program. However, it is contended that there is no way of truly predicting what the outcomes from such a music therapist professional learning program may be.

The exploration of a music therapist led teacher professional learning program has illuminated the potential for teacher professional learning programs of this type in strengthening the wellbeing of all members of the classroom; both teachers and students. Findings suggest that future teacher professional learning programs may benefit from a combined focus on the development of both pedagogical and self-care practices, rather than seeing these as dichotomous. Teachers' positive appraisal of the program suggests the value of incorporating theoretical knowledge from music therapy into future teacher professional learning programs as well as the training of pre-service teachers, and music specialist teachers.

The findings from this inquiry have also echoed the writing of authors regarding the differing nature of support provided to teachers depending on their career stage (Penn-Edwards et al., 2016; Van Droogenbroeck et al., 2014). Within this project, teachers early in their careers seemed to seek support to build their use of teaching practices. By contrast, teachers later in their career appeared to appreciate the support to develop self-care practices using music that allowed them to retain enthusiasm for their professional responsibilities. Further exploration into music therapist teacher professional learning programs to support teachers at different career stages is required.

An important understanding garnered from the conscious act of relinquishing control over the measurement of teacher and student outcomes within the program was that the classroom practices used by music therapist and teacher were not expected to be the same. As such, any practices that the teachers ultimately sustained were expected to be different to the practices shared within the professional learning program. Furthermore, choosing not to measure outcomes within the professional learning program provided another opportunity for resisting hegemonic norms within the current enactment of education. This included resisting both the notion of performativity within teacher professional learning programs and the ableist assumption that the success of the program could be measured against pre-determined standards.

As argued within Chapter Two, attempting to build the abilities of teachers to use music therapeutically with their students is outside of the scope of teachers' training and professional responsibilities. It is further offered that training professionals and caregivers from other practice contexts to use music therapeutically may also be an inadvisable intention. Findings from this study suggest that music therapists would benefit from expanding their expectations of possible sustained activities and benefits from the use of music therapist professional and caregiver support practices. It is thus argued that aiming to support professionals and caregivers to grow related to their own particular learning intentions is a worthwhile intention for future programs.

Provocation 6: What can music therapists offer? Sharing through music therapy informed practices.

When considering “music therapist as enabler of sharing”, an intention to share knowledge gleaned from research into music therapy processes and practices is warranted.

Indeed, viewing music therapists as “enablers of sharing” promotes the value of music therapists attributing time to sharing knowledge beyond the music therapy profession. Rather than viewing this implication as an inhibitor to the conceptualisation of music therapy as a distinct and valued profession, this provocation seeks to celebrate the perspective of music therapists as creative thought leaders. It is not intended to suggest that this study is the first of its kind. There are many other examples of music therapy researchers sharing knowledge outside of music therapy journals, including publications by numerous authors working to support teachers within the domain of school-based music therapy practice (Brotons, 2001; McFerran, Crooke, & Bolger, 2017; McFerran & Hunt, 2008; McFerran & Rickson, 2014; McFerran et al., 2015; Montgomery & Martinson, 2006; Pellitteri, 2000; J. Smith, 2017). Rather, it is contended that supporting others through the provision of music therapist professional and caregiver support programs is a worthwhile future direction for music therapy practice.

Excitingly, at the recent Australian music therapy conference, numerous papers described programs in which a music therapist was supporting professionals and caregivers to use music. These programs took place in such varied settings as a primary school (Steele, 2019), residential aged care home (Morse & Antipas, 2019) and the eating disorder unit of a public hospital (Punch & Bibb, 2019). Further research and publication exploring the delivery of music therapist professional and caregiver support programs across contexts is warranted.

Within this research project, holding a direct focus on the needs of the teachers led to the realisation that an appropriate framework for supporting teachers would benefit from aligning with teachers’ professional obligations. This led to the emergence of the Music for Classroom Wellbeing Professional Learning Program as a framework for the delivery of a music therapist teacher support program. However, when planning to facilitate this program

it was important to extrapolate that the teachers participating in the professional learning program would not be participating in music therapy per se. Rather, it was understood within this project that teachers were engaging in a process of professional learning *informed* by the practice of music therapy. Making this distinction was crucial for ensuring that I upheld my ethical obligations as both a music therapist and researcher and providing teacher participants with explicit information about their role in the program. It is hoped that music therapists working in a range of other settings in the future may similarly question the possibility of best offering their expertise as a registered music therapist through the sharing of music therapy informed practices with professionals and caregivers.

A further related implication is that following the guiding principles for facilitating a Music for Classroom Wellbeing Professional Learning Program does not necessarily require music therapy qualifications. Rather it is anticipated that the guiding practice principles illuminated within this study may be applied by individuals with other areas of professional practice knowledge working in schools. Thus, it is anticipated that, in addition to music therapists, a Music for Classroom Wellbeing Professional Learning Program could be potentially delivered by therapeutically oriented music teachers or musically oriented school wellbeing staff members.

Provocation 7: How can music therapists be supported? Implications for music therapist professional learning.

The final provocation for this chapter relates to the ways in which findings from this study of teacher professional learning has illuminated a number of practices that may have valuable application in the continuing professional development of music therapists, as well as music therapy training programs. Like teachers, music therapists are required to uphold nationally recognised standards of practice (Australian Music Therapy Association, 2018) as

well as engage in continuing professional development (Australian Music Therapy Association, 2019). Both music therapists-in-training and practicing music therapists have typically received support with their continuing development from another professional through the process of supervision (Forinash, 2001).

One component of the current Australian music therapy practice guidelines relates to the ethical responsibility for registered music therapists to engage in ongoing “professional development and self-care” (Australian Music Therapy Association, 2018, p. 6). Furthermore, the importance of engaging in self-care practices to avoid burning out as a music therapist has been regularly cited in recent literature (Bradt, 2019; Clements-Cortes, 2013; Y. Kim, 2012, 2016; Shaw, 2019; Vega, 2010). Findings from this PhD project thus echo recent pleas from authors suggesting the necessity of self-care practices in the ongoing “professional nourishment” of registered music therapists (Bradt, 2019). It is suggested that music therapy teacher training courses should follow the lead of programs described by social work educators (Grise-Owens, Miller, Escobar-Ratliff, & George, 2018) and explicitly teach self-care practices as part of professional training. It is further argued that any conversation about the sustainable provision of music therapy programs must include a discussion of the importance of practices that seek to sustain the music therapist themselves.

When facilitating the music therapist teacher support program for this study I consciously engaged in numerous regular self-care practices. These included such varied activities suggested in the music therapy literature base connecting socially with music therapy colleagues (Y. Kim, 2012), and managing stress through yoga and meditation (Clements-Cortes, 2013). I also found it beneficial to continue to participate in my own community music making through chanting in a group, a practice understood by music therapy authors as calming (Hanser & Mandel, 2010, p. 91).

It is suggested that several effective practices within this professional learning program outlined in this thesis could be incorporated into the supervision of music therapists. These practices include engaging with an experienced music therapist in order to:

- Dialogue about personal resources, strengths and challenges of current music therapy and self-care practices
- Set areas for exploration in relation to developing against the Australian Music Therapy Association competency standards of practice (Australian Music Therapy Association, 2018)
- Receive ongoing tailored individual support, within and outside of music therapy sessions
- Receive ongoing group support as part of a collegiate community of practice
- Reflect on areas of professional and personal growth, and helpful and unhelpful support and learning practices.

It is also contended that, like teachers, the ongoing growth of music therapists takes place at the nexus between the personal and professional and similarly constitutes “identity work” (Mockler, 2013). It is recommended that music therapists are offered ongoing integrated support with their professional nourishment so that they may engage in what Shaw (2019) has described as “a care of the self and grounding in the quest to social justice” (p.295).

Chapter Conclusion

The findings of this project offer great potential for shifting future music therapist professional and caregiver support models of practice, as well as for the ongoing learning of music therapy students and practitioners. Further research on the interweaving of the development of practices used to care for others and practices used to care for ourselves is greatly needed. Furthermore, the findings of this study illustrated the potential of music

therapists to enable teachers to counter the use of neoliberal practices in their own context. It is hoped that the findings of this study stimulate future provocative discussions about ways to support professionals and caregivers in other settings to enact change through the use of practices informed by music therapy. The following chapter concludes this thesis with a personal reflection on the research project as a whole.

Chapter Eleven: A Reflexive Conclusion to the Research Project

Bearing witness to teachers.

Within this research project I attempted to “bear witness” to the often overlooked voice of teacher participants and endeavoured to follow the lead of music therapy colleagues by representing teachers with a strengths-based lens (Fairchild & Bibb, 2016). It is important to be transparent that ultimately, however, the ethnographically informed perspective of this study meant that any interpretations offered within this thesis were made by myself as music therapist-researcher. While I do have lived experience of being a teacher, and as such feel comfortable to comment on the challenges associated with being a teacher at this time in history, future such research would benefit from affording a greater voice to the perspectives of the teacher participants themselves.

Nonetheless, spending time in other teachers’ classrooms gave me the rare opportunity to bear witness to the immense toll of the work that teachers do in our society. The teachers I collaborated with rarely had a break. They had little say over how they ran their lessons, and what content they could deliver. They regularly lamented that they couldn’t work in the manner that they had been trained at university, or in ways that responded to the needs of their students in the here and now. And yet, within this research project I witnessed countless examples of the ways in which teachers related to their students with professionalism, expertise and a profound level of care.

Bearing witness to the teachers in this study allowed me to have a newfound appreciation for the privilege of being employed as a school music therapist. In Chapter One of this thesis I explained my decision to retrain as a teacher by stating that I didn’t feel that I had enough power to enact change across the whole school from my position as music therapist. I have also previously expended a great deal of energy feeling unrecognised and misunderstood by my teaching colleagues. However, witnessing the teacher participants of

this professional learning program grapple with excessive accountability measures, assessment and reporting procedures and ubiquitous time constraints that made up their everyday experience has awoken me to the immense power that comes from being employed as a music therapist in a school. I have come to believe that music therapists in schools are in the uniquely powerful position of having sovereignty over our daily work practices in a manner that is simply not available to teachers. This does not mean that we are immune to the influence of the wider neoliberal climate, or that the climate does not in any way impact upon our practice as music therapists. Rather, I now understand that music therapists working in schools are usually afforded a lot more freedom with how we choose to practice than our teacher counterparts.

While facilitating the professional learning program, I dictated the content of sessions. I created the timetable. I decided when to arrive and when to leave school grounds. I worked through the teachers' lunchbreaks as I understood this to be important time for me to touch base with teacher participants, but I regularly headed to the staff room to fuel my pregnant appetite for salty biscuits during class time. Admittedly, this would likely have been different if the school had been funding the program, but the reality was that I had ownership over how I chose to practice within the program.

One criticism that emerged from a teacher through my reflection on the experience of studying the Music for Classroom Wellbeing Professional Learning Program was that teachers were not provided with ongoing support after the program had ceased. It is suggested that future research projects exploring the potential of music therapist professional and caregiver support programs would do well to include ongoing support as part of the program design. Indeed, the value of providing ongoing support to teachers has been suggested by several other music therapist authors describing music therapist teacher support

programs (Bolger & McFerran, 2013; Coombes, 2011; Coombes & Tombs-Katz, 2009; McFerran et al., 2015; Rickson, 2012)

Music therapy as a form of “compassionate activism”.

This research project allowed me the privileged experience of attributing years to explore new ways of enacting a school music therapy program that would maximise the possibilities of sustained aftereffects. The result of this exploration, the music therapist teacher support program Music for Classroom Wellbeing Professional Learning provides a novel way for considering music therapists as potential leaders of transformative and activist practices in a range of contexts.

Compassionate activism (Garavan, 2012) is a framework for understanding models of social care that seek to achieve both personal care and growth of individuals in the context of wider systemic change. When outlining the principles of a compassionate activist approach to supporting an individual in the context of an aged care setting, Garavan draws upon both the person-centred humanistic theories of Rogers, and the critical consciousness raising activist theories of Freire. It is proposed that my positioning as enabler of sharing within Music for Classroom Wellbeing Professional Learning Program presented in this thesis is an example of compassionate activism. During this professional learning program, I sought to simultaneously offer care to teachers while prompting teachers to engage in practices that countered the dominant educational paradigm. A greater consideration of the potential for delivering similar compassionate activist programs may be helpful when considering new ways of enacting a post-humanist approach to community music therapy (Andsell & Stige, 2018). It is hoped that recognising the potential of music therapists to embody the position of “enabler” may encourage music therapists engaging in professional and caregiver support practices to shift their practices. If music therapists engaging in these programs are able to move beyond a consideration of meeting the needs of individuals towards supporting

individuals so that they may contribute to wider systemic change, the impact of a single music therapist is greatly amplified.

Music therapist sustainability a factor in program sustainability.

This research project began as part of a wider Building Schools Through the Arts partnership exploration into the sustainable provision of school arts programs delivered by external providers. Findings from the ensuing study of Music for Classroom Wellbeing Professional Learning have contributed new knowledge about the potential of music therapists in supporting teachers to sustain outcomes after a music therapist is no longer present.

However, previous literature describing the importance of planning for the sustainable provision of community music therapy programs has foregrounded a discussion of outcomes sustained within the program context. Reflecting on the study of Music for Classroom Wellbeing Professional Learning has identified the importance of including the experience of the music therapist when considering program sustainability.

On a pragmatic level, a consideration of the needs of myself as music therapist guided the decision to restrict the length of the professional learning program to one day a week over two school terms. I knew from the first year of this project that the leading national external provider of school arts programs typically engaged with a school for one day a week over two school terms (The Song Room, 2013). While I was dedicated to working with teachers who volunteered for participation, I hadn't expected there to be so many, and wondered how I was going to fit them all in when only spending one day a week at the school. I also realised that while working with so many staff members I would really need to focus on small, targeted activities. On the other hand, I was hopeful that I could develop an achievable model of professional learning within my PhD project that could potentially lead towards future employment supporting teachers to use music to promote classroom wellbeing. It was felt at

the time that keeping the program delivery equal to that of an industry partner could ultimately support an economic argument about the relative cost of school arts programs provided by a music therapist or teaching artist. Consequently, I was wary of extending my hours to spend two days at the school. Which school principal in this neoliberal era of accountability could afford to pay an external consultant for more than one day a week, if that?

Additionally, by the conclusion of the professional learning program I had entered the second trimester of my pregnancy. I was encouraged by my supervisors to contain the research project so that I may engage in deep processes of meaning making before I went on maternity leave. Retrospectively, it would have been valuable to provide ongoing support to the teachers after the conclusion of the program in order to improve the likelihood of their sustained use of practices. It is likely that failing to do so contributed to the challenges some teachers described with initiating musical engagements in their classroom to target students' personal and social learning the following year.

A sung reflection on Music for Classroom Wellbeing Professional Learning

I grappled with the decision not to include videos, photos and audio recordings of the Music for Classroom Wellbeing Professional Learning program within the body of this thesis. Ultimately, I made a decision not to include artifacts in the body of this thesis to respect the privacy of the participants. However, I feel some level of discomfort that a thesis advocating for creative and diverse ways of learning and presenting knowledge contains such an emphasis on written text. I thus chose to present a sung reflection on the research project at this juncture as an example of the many varied reflexive practices I undertook when conducting this research project.

This sung reflection aligns with the recent descriptions of the use of arts-based methods as a means of engaging in reflexive practices in qualitative music therapy research

projects (Fairchild, 2018). Fairchild describes the ways in which use of the researcher's own personal arts-based practices can allow new understandings to emerge about the impact of the research project on the emotional wellbeing of the researcher. I offer the following sung reflection as a further illustration of the self-care practices I engaged in while facilitating this project that were instrumental in enabling me to support teachers. This sung reflection emerged as I sat at my piano in the final stages of writing up this thesis. Rather than crafting this reflection into a fully formed song, the simplistic and repetitive "stream of consciousness" structure of this reflection is presented as an exemplar of an alternative performative practice for reflecting on research. Link to a recording of this sung reflection is included in Appendix L.

Sung reflection, Wednesday 22nd January 2019

I see this child at school that no one wants to teach
Too different, too noisy, too tough to reach
Hey Meg, come over here I want to play you a song.
It will make me feel better...
The bell goes. I'm sorry but I need to move on...

I look closer and see the teacher working through her break
She wants to do more scared she'll make a mistake
So much maths to do, so much spelling to get through
Hey Meg, what I really need is some help,
Could you help me please?

So teacher I'll help you

Teacher I'll sing a song for you

Teacher I'll ask you how you're going

I'll focus all the time I have on you

And as I'm driving to work I put a song on for me

And I take some deep breaths

So I can sustain myself

And get ready to be what you need me to be

Teacher I see a spark in your eyes

So I'll plant some seeds and watch you grow

Your students blossom when you care for yourself

And share with each other, your colleagues, your friends and your family.

The end of the story.

This study of a music therapist teacher support program has provoked a new way for considering musical engagement as a starting point for supporting teachers to promote classroom wellbeing in a manner that honours the strengths and needs of teachers. It is worthy of mention that while I chose to use musical engagements as the starting point within this program, it is not suggested that music making is the only way to support teachers to promote classroom wellbeing. Leveraging the affordances of many other activities, arts-based and otherwise, would have likely provided support to teachers as well, and attracted the participation of a different cohort of teachers. Nevertheless, it is also contended that the frame for this music therapist teacher support program attracted a group of teachers who were passionate about their role in contributing towards wellbeing in their school setting. When describing a community music therapy informed approach to practice, Wood (2016) attests

that music therapy “is made of individual stories *that are also* stories about groups and wider social considerations” (p. 62). It is hoped that the stories of individual teachers contained within this thesis provide an example of the possibility of music therapist professional and caregiver support practices in contributing to change in the wider socio-political sphere.

Music therapists are experts at promoting the affordances of music within the confines of a therapeutic relationship. However, this research project has helped me to explore possibilities for music therapists to promote music in the everyday life of all people, not just those engaging in formal music therapy. Future music therapists have an important role in supporting others to enjoy the benefits that result from leveraging the affordances of music in their own contexts. I learned through this research project that sometimes it can be a radical act to simply ask someone about their favourite song. To close with the words of the most senior teacher, Amelia, the Music for Classroom Wellbeing Professional Learning Program:

...got the wheels turning and, you know, I'm very excited because, yeah, I think I said at the start of this that teaching was getting - it's getting everybody down. You know, just the workload and the paperwork and everything that's being shoved on you. It's just, you know, there's no time to teach. But as soon as I put on the music or we have a little dance together it just brings out the best in me.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Ethics Approval Letters

From: research@cem.edu.au
Subject: Research Application 0616: Outcome (Approved)
Date: 19 April 2017 at 9:29:23 am AEST
To: steelem@student.unimelb.edu.au
Cc: research@cem.edu.au

Dear Ms Steele

Congratulations, your research application, 0616 - 'Understanding how teachers explore classroom wellbeing when participating in a music therapy professional learning program.', has been approved by Catholic Education Melbourne.

I am pleased to advise that your research application is approved in principle subject to the eight standard conditions outlined below.

1. The decision as to whether or not research can proceed in a school rests with the school's principal, so you will need to obtain their approval directly before commencing any research activity. You should provide the principal with an outline of your research proposal and indicate what will be asked of the school. A copy of this email of approval, and a copy of notification of approval from your organisation's/university's Ethics Committee, should also be provided.
2. A copy of the approval notification from your institution's Ethics Committee must be forwarded to this Office (if not already provided), together with any modifications to your research protocol requested by the Committee. You may not start any research in Catholic schools until this step has been completed.
3. A Working with Children (WWC) check – or registration with the Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT) – is necessary for all researchers visiting schools. Appropriate documentation must be shown to the principal before starting the research in the school.
4. No student is to participate in the research study unless s/he is willing to do so and consent is given by a parent/guardian.
5. Any substantial modifications to the research proposal, or additional research involving use of the data collected, will require a further research application to be submitted to Catholic Education Melbourne.
6. Data relating to individuals or the school are to remain confidential and protected in line with the Privacy Act 1988 (Commonwealth).
7. Since participating schools have an interest in research findings, you should consider ways in which the results of the study could be made available for the benefit of the school community.
8. At the conclusion of the study, a copy or summary of the research findings

should be forwarded to Catholic Education Melbourne. It would be appreciated if you could submit this via email to research@cem.edu.au.

I wish you well with your research study. The information provided in your proposal is now closed for further changes. If you have any queries concerning this matter or need to make amendments in the future, please contact Ms Shani Prendergast at research@cem.edu.au.

Yours sincerely

Mr Jim Miles
DIRECTOR ENTERPRISE SERVICES
Catholic Education Melbourne

27 April 2017

Prof K.S. McFerran
Melbourne Conservatorium of Music
The University of Melbourne

Dear Professor McFerran

Project title: **Understanding what conditions impact the success of school-based arts programs**

Researchers: **M Steele, Prof K S McFerran, Dr A H Crooke**

Ethics ID: **1545449.3**

I am pleased to advise that the amendment to this Project dated 1 March 2017 was approved by the Humanities and Applied Sciences Human Ethics Sub-Committee on 27 April 2017.

Please note it is your responsibility to ensure that all people associated with the Project are made aware of the amendment.

Yours sincerely



Ms Jennifer Hassell - HESC Secretary
Secretary, Humanities and Applied Sciences
Phone: 90353341, Email: hassell@unimelb.edu.au

09 November 2017

Prof K.S. McFerran
Melbourne Conservatorium of Music
The University of Melbourne

Dear Professor McFerran

Project title: **Understanding what conditions impact the success of school-based arts programs**

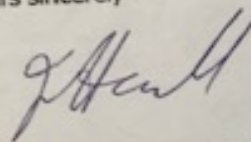
Researchers: **M Steele, Prof K S McFerran, Dr A H Crooke**

Ethics ID: **1545449.4**

I am pleased to advise that the amendment to this Project dated 20 October 2017 was approved by the Humanities and Applied Sciences Human Ethics Sub-Committee on 9 November 2017.

Please note it is your responsibility to ensure that all people associated with the Project are made aware of the amendment.

Yours sincerely



Ms Jennifer Hassell - HESC Secretary
Secretary, Humanities and Applied Sciences
Phone: 90353341, Email: hassell@unimelb.edu.au

Appendix B: Plain Language Statements

Plain Language Statement Professional Learning Program:



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Staff Plain Language Statement

BUILDING SCHOOLS THROUGH ARTS (BuSTA)

Researcher details:

Name: Professor Katrina McFerran, Melbourne Conservatorium of Music, University of Melbourne, Principal researcher

Email: k.mcferran@unimelb.edu.au **University phone number:** +61 3 8344 7382

Name: Ms. Megan Steele, Melbourne Conservatorium of Music, University of Melbourne, Student researcher

Email: steelem@student.unimelb.edu.au

Project details:

This research project has been funded by the Australian Research Council (of the Australian Federal Government), is being carried out by researchers from the Melbourne Conservatorium of Music at the University of Melbourne, and has been designed in conjunction with Catholic Education Melbourne and The Song Room.

You are invited to participate in this project, which is being conducted by Professor Katrina McFerran, Dr. Alexander Crooke and Ms. Megan Steele of the Faculty of the VCA & MCM at The University of Melbourne. Both the University of Melbourne's Human Research Ethics Committee and Catholic Education Melbourne's Policy and Research Office have approved this project.

This study aims to explore further what conditions promote or prevent engagement in school-based arts programs with an aim to build teacher capacity at arts delivery, and how to maximise the benefits of this engagement. While arts programs have been shown to benefit school communities in many ways, little is known about what makes these benefits more or less likely to occur, or what makes them last. By finding out what conditions are best suited to promoting these benefits, we will be able to help schools and policymakers make decisions about the best way to support arts programs in Australian schools. This includes knowing what kind of program will suit a particular school community, what is needed to support that program to make it successful, and how to get the most benefits for that community.

To explore this, the student researcher will facilitate a tailored music program in your school. Programs are class-based and designed to boost students' personal and academic development, run for six months. The program will also include professional learning opportunities for you as a staff member.

What will I be asked to do?

Should you agree to participate in the research aspect of this project, you would be asked to contribute via different research activities depending on your connection to the school:

All School Staff:

- We will ask you to participate in an interview or group discussion that will take approximately between 30 minutes and 60 minutes.

In this session, we will ask you about your experiences of music program in your school. This will include discussions about any benefits you noticed, and if there is/was anything about the school community that made it work well, or may have prevented it being better. With your permission, the interview would be audio-recorded so that we can ensure that we make an accurate record of what you say. Some participants may be offered the opportunity to reflect further on

HREC: 090001

ETHICS APPLICATION ID: 1545449.3

DATE: 16/2/17 PLS VERSION: 3

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their responses as the project unfolds to ensure we have accurately interpreted what you have told us. If you are invited to do this, it will also be in the form of an interview or a group discussion that will again be audio-recorded.

Teaching Staff:

- We will also ask you to engage with the researcher when participating in and conducting planning related to the music program, or other arts or wellbeing-related activities, over the six-month project period.

During these sessions, the researcher will co-facilitate student activities and/or staff professional development sessions with you and/or other staff members. The researcher will ask questions, take notes, and sometimes record sessions using video, photo or audio devices.

What if I don't want to, or agree and then change my mind?

Your involvement in the project is completely voluntary and you are free to withdraw from all (or any part of) this study at any point. Further, you are free to withdraw any of your contributions to the project at any time until the data has been collated and it is no longer possible to separate your contribution to the overall data.

How long is my contribution expected to take?

Our estimate of the time commitment required of you depends on which activities you will be invited to participate in. Interviews or group discussions will be approximately between 30 minutes and 60 minutes per session. If you are invited to actively take part in professional learning with the researcher, this will be an ongoing activity over the six-month project period, and can be negotiated regularly with the research team.

How will any potential risks be minimised?

We do not expect there to be any risks or negative consequences from taking part in this research project. We will not be discussing any challenging information, or anything that may incriminate you or anyone else.

Will I be able to be identified as a participant in this project?

You have been selected to participate in this project because Catholic Education Melbourne has selected your school to participate in the project, and your principal has agreed for the school to be involved. You have been identified as a key stakeholder in your school that will be involved in some way with The Song Room arts program that will be a part of this project. There is no need for us to disclose your name when we publish or present the results of this research. We can use a pseudonym (pretend name) whenever we are describing your responses, and remove any contextual details that might reveal your identity. We would protect your anonymity to the fullest possible extent within the limits of the law and any records of your contribution will be kept on the Principal researcher's password protected computer. You should note, however, that since the number of potential participants is small, it might still be possible for someone to identify you.

What about confidentiality?

Data and all identifying information is to be kept in separate locked filing cabinets, and access to computer files will be available by named researchers only to protect the confidentiality of data that you provide. There are legal limits to data confidentiality. It is possible for data to be subject to subpoena, freedom of information request or mandated reporting by some professions.

What happens to my contributions after the project has finished?

Materials collected during this study will be retained for a minimum of five years after publication of the research – in journals, reports, or at conferences – in accordance with the University's Code of Conduct for Research. After the five

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years, all physical materials will be destroyed, and digital files deleted. De-identified research reports will be sent to your school within months of the school's participation, and you may be invited to colloquiums to hear about findings.

What if I have concerns?

If you have any concerns or complaints about the conduct of this research project, you can contact the Manager, Human Research Ethics, Office for Research Ethics and Integrity, The University of Melbourne, Phone +61 3 8344 2073, email humanethics-complaints@unimelb.edu.au quoting HREC 1545449.

What happens next?

Thank you for considering this invitation to participate in our research project. If you do decide to participate, one of the researchers will provide you with a consent form. Please indicate that you have read and understood this information by signing the accompanying consent form and returning it to one of the researchers. Whether or not you decide to participate, this Plain Language Statement is yours to keep.

Thank you for your time in reading this information statement.

Sincerely,

Dr Katrina Skewes McFerran RMT
Professor and Head of Music Therapy
Associate Dean Research

Plain Language Statement Follow-Up Interview:



FACULTY OF
VCA &
MCM

Staff Plain Language Statement BUILDING SCHOOLS THROUGH ARTS (BuSTA)

Researcher details:

Name: Professor Katrina McFerran, Melbourne Conservatorium of Music, University of Melbourne, Principal researcher
Email: k.mcferran@unimelb.edu.au **University phone number:** +61 3 8344 7382

Name: Dr. Alexander Crooke, Melbourne Conservatorium of Music, University of Melbourne
Email: alexander.crooke@unimelb.edu.au

Name: Ms. Megan Steele, Melbourne Conservatorium of Music, University of Melbourne, Student researcher
Email: steelem@student.unimelb.edu.au

Project details:

This research project has been funded by the Australian Research Council (of the Australian Federal Government), is being carried out by researchers from the Melbourne Conservatorium of Music at the University of Melbourne, and has been designed in conjunction with Catholic Education Melbourne and The Song Room.

You are invited to continue your participation in this project, which is being conducted by Professor Katrina McFerran, Dr. Alexander Crooke and Ms. Megan Steele of the Faculty of the VCA & MCM at The University of Melbourne. Both the University of Melbourne's Human Research Ethics Committee and Catholic Education Melbourne's Policy and Research Office have approved this project.

This study aims to explore further what conditions promote or prevent engagement in school-based arts programs with an aim to build teacher capacity at arts delivery, and how to maximise the benefits of this engagement. While arts programs have been shown to benefit school communities in many ways, little is known about what makes these benefits more or less likely to occur, or what makes them last. By finding out what conditions are best suited to promoting these benefits, we will be able to help schools and policymakers make decisions about the best way to support arts programs in Australian schools. To explore this, you are being invited to participate in a further evaluation process due to your previous engagement with this study.

What will I be asked to do?

Should you agree to participate in the research aspect of this project, you would be asked to contribute through an interview or group discussion that will take approximately between 30 minutes and 60 minutes.

In this session, we will ask you about your experience of the music program in your school. This will include discussions about any benefits you noticed, and if there is/was anything about the school community that made it work well, or may have prevented it being better. With your permission, the interview would be audio-recorded so that we can ensure that we make an accurate record of what you say. Some participants may be offered the opportunity to reflect further on their responses as the project unfolds to ensure we have accurately interpreted what you have told us. If you are invited to do this, it will also be in the form of an interview or a group discussion that will again be audio-recorded.

What if I don't want to, or agree and then change my mind?

Your involvement in the project is completely voluntary and you are free to withdraw from all (or any part of) this study at any point. Further, you are free to withdraw any of your contributions to the project at any time until the data has been collated and it is no longer possible to separate your contribution to the overall data.

How long is my contribution expected to take?

HREC: 090001

ETHICS APPLICATION ID: 1545449.4

DATE: 19.10.17 PLS VERSION: 4



FACULTY OF
VCA &
MCM

Interviews or group discussions will be approximately between 30 minutes and 60 minutes per session.

How will any potential risks be minimised?

We do not expect there to be any risks or negative consequences from taking part in this research project. We will not be discussing any challenging information, or anything that may incriminate you or anyone else.

Will I be able to be identified as a participant in this project?

You have been invited to participate in this project you volunteered to participate in the project during 2017. There is no need for us to disclose your name when we publish or present the results of this research. We can use a pseudonym (pretend name) whenever we are describing your responses, and remove any contextual details that might reveal your identity. We would protect your anonymity to the fullest possible extent within the limits of the law and any records of your contribution will be kept on the student researcher's password protected computer. You should note, however, that since the number of potential participants is small, it might still be possible for someone to identify you.

What about confidentiality?

Data and all identifying information is to be kept in separate locked filing cabinets, and access to computer files will be available by named researchers only to protect the confidentiality of data that you provide. There are legal limits to data confidentiality. It is possible for data to be subject to subpoena, freedom of information request or mandated reporting by some professions.

What happens to my contributions after the project has finished?

Materials collected during this study will be retained for a minimum of five years after publication of the research – in journals, reports, or at conferences – in accordance with the University's Code of Conduct for Research. After the five years, all physical materials will be destroyed, and digital files deleted. De-identified research reports will be sent to your school within months of the school's participation, and you may be invited to colloquiums to hear about findings.

What if I have concerns?

If you have any concerns or complaints about the conduct of this research project, you can contact the Manager, Human Research Ethics, Office for Research Ethics and Integrity, The University of Melbourne, Phone +61 3 8344 2073, email humanethics-complaints@unimelb.edu.au quoting HREC 1545449.

What happens next?

Thank you for considering this invitation to participate in our research project. If you do decide to participate, one of the researchers will provide you with a consent form. Please indicate that you have read and understood this information by signing the accompanying consent form and returning it to one of the researchers. Whether or not you decide to participate, this Plain Language Statement is yours to keep.

Thank you for your time in reading this information statement.

Sincerely,

Dr Katrina Skewes McFerran RMT
Professor and Head of Music Therapy, Associate Dean Research

Appendix C: Consent Forms

Consent form Professional Learning Program:



Consent form for persons participating in a research project

PROJECT TITLE:

Building Schools Through Arts (*BuSTA*)

Name of participant:

Name of investigator(s): Professor Katrina McFerran, Dr Alexander Crooke, Ms Megan Steele

1. I consent to participate in this project, the details of which have been explained to me, and I have been provided with a written plain language statement to keep.
2. I understand that after I sign and return this consent form it will be retained by the researchers.
3. I understand that my participation will involve an interview or group discussion about arts programs in schools, and may include researchers facilitating / participating in and/or observing my classes/programs/professional learning/other sessions. I also agree that the researchers may use the results as described in the plain language statement.
4. I acknowledge that I have been informed that:
 - (a) the project is for the purpose of research, and the possible effects of participation have been explained to my satisfaction;
 - (b) I am free to withdraw from this study at any point. Further, I am free to withdraw any of my contributions to the project at any time until the data has been collated and it is no longer possible to separate my contribution to the overall data;
 - (d) I have been informed that the confidentiality of the information I provide will be safeguarded subject to any legal requirements;
 - (e) I have been informed that with my consent the interview or group discussion will be audio-recorded, and I understand these recordings will be stored at University of Melbourne and will be destroyed after five years;
 - (f) while every precaution will be taken to protect my identity if I choose to remain anonymous or be referred to by a pseudonym, the small numbers in this project may mean that I could be identified;
 - (g) I have been informed that a copy of the research findings will be forwarded to me;
 - (h) outcomes of this research may be published in other forms such as journal articles or conference papers and my contributions will be acknowledged appropriately;

(h) video footage or photographs may taken during the project and be used in conference presentations;

I wish to be referred to in research publications and presentations using a pseudonym

no

☐ **yes** ☐

(please tick
one)

I wish my face to be pixilated in any video footage or photographs taken

no

☐ **yes** ☐

(please tick
one)

Participant signature:

Date:

Consent Form Follow Up Interview:

Consent form for persons participating in a research project

PROJECT TITLE:

Building Schools Through Arts (*BuSTA*)

Name of participant: _____

Name of investigator(s): Professor Katrina McFerran, Dr Alexander Crooke, Ms Megan Steele _____

1. I consent to participate in this project, the details of which have been explained to me, and I have been provided with a written plain language statement to keep.
2. I understand that after I sign and return this consent form it will be retained by the researchers.
3. I understand that my participation will involve an interview or group discussion about arts programs in schools, and may include researchers participating in and observing my classes/programs/other sessions. I also agree that the researchers may use the results as described in the plain language statement.
4. I acknowledge that I have been informed that:
 - (a) the project is for the purpose of research, and the possible effects of participation have been explained to my satisfaction;
 - (b) I am free to withdraw from this study at any point. Further, I am free to withdraw any of my contributions to the project at any time until the data has been collated and it is no longer possible to separate my contribution to the overall data;
 - (d) I have been informed that the confidentiality of the information I provide will be safeguarded subject to any legal requirements;
 - (e) I have been informed that with my consent the interview or group discussion will be audio-recorded, and I understand these recordings will be stored at University of Melbourne and will be destroyed after five years;
 - (f) while every precaution will be taken to protect my identity if I choose to remain anonymous or be referred to by a pseudonym, the small numbers in this project may mean that I could be identified;
 - (g) I have been informed that a copy of the research findings will be forwarded to me;
 - (h) outcomes of this research may be published in other forms such as journal articles or conference papers and my contributions will be acknowledged appropriately;
 - (h) video footage may taken during the project and be used in conference presentations;

I wish to be referred to in research publications and presentations using a pseudonym

yes ☐ **no**

(please tick one)

I wish my face to be pixilated in any video footage taken

yes ☐ **no**

(please tick one)

Appendix D: Observation Template

How does the classroom feel?
Look?
What is the content being taught?
Student management:
How is it being taught?
How does the teacher <i>seem</i> in regard to wellbeing?
Is there overt wellbeing content being taught? (Resilience / positive relationships / inclusivity / acceptance of diversity / emotional expression)?
Are there any obvious needs from students?
Any music or arts?
Other:

Appendix E: Assessment Conversation Guide

Background Information					
Teacher Name and Class					
Consent received?					
Pseudonym choice?					
What drew you to be involved in this program?					
Student consent explained?					
How long have you been teaching? worked at this school?					
Descriptive sentence to describe you?					
Timetable Tuesday					

Timetable Wednesday					
Yard duty Tuesday?					
Yard duty Wednesday?					
Other:					

The following questions will give me some background information on both you as a teacher and your students in terms of wellbeing needs, music preferences and experience and professional learning / student learning intentions. This information will help us to tailor a classroom music for classroom wellbeing program that is UNIQUE for you and your students ☺

Wellbeing			
Teacher	How do you see your role as a teacher in relation to wellbeing?	Tell me how you plan your lessons? How does wellbeing fit in?	How is <i>your own</i> personal classroom wellbeing?
Students	How is the classroom wellbeing of your students?	Are there any particular student needs to take into consideration?	Other:
Music			
Teacher	What is your personal experience of music? (in school, family, lessons, now, other)	What is your preferred music now? When you were a teenager?	What instruments (if any) do you play? How confident would you be to use them in your classroom? How do you feel about singing with me now?

Students	How do you see the role of music in school? How have you/ do you use it in your classroom?	What are your students' musical preferences?	Other:
Teaching and Learning			
Teacher	What are your strengths as a teacher?	Which AITSL Standard/s would you like to develop your practice in during this program?	
Students	What are the strengths of your class group?	Which area/s from the Personal and Social Capability would you like to focus on for this program?	

Appendix F: Example of Field Notes

Fieldnotes, 23.5.2017, Arrived 8:40am.

Approached student wellbeing coordinator teacher in staffroom first up and asked if he was going to have time to chat for 5 minutes today – he told me that he is booked up. While I know this is likely to be the case, I feel that he is perhaps not a key player, and as I already have a full list of teachers wanting to participate in professional learning I won't directly pursue him.

By contrast, on coming out of the toilet I was approached by Amelia with a huge smile. She told me that they were having their morning prayer session at 9:30 in Arabic this morning and invited me along. Mixed emotions of simultaneously feeling thrilled that she really wants to engage, and squeamish about the concept of prayer in the classroom. How can I ensure that my own discomfort with Catholic religious beliefs and practices does not impact on the professional learning program / research process?

Also then went for a walk out into the yard and bumped into a teacher I hadn't met before – introduced myself. She is the new arrivals teacher and works here on a Tues and Wednesday, after asking what I was doing invited me along to the music group they are running for refugee students on a Wednesday. I told her that I would be more working with teachers on professional learning, but that it would be good to touch base with her over the next two terms. I am excited that they already have music happening within the school for students with a particular perceived need. I wonder what it looks like / how I could support it / whether to leave it alone?

Walking out in the yard I had a real flashback to when I was filling in as a casual music therapist in a hospital, not having a clear role – felt unsettling.

Back in the staff room emailed [deputy principal] to ask for some time today and 5 mins later saw her come in from yard duty – would have been better to have approached her verbally.

At 9:30 I went down to Amelia's classroom but she had already done the morning session while a few of the mums stayed and watched after school drop off. A sense that there is a lot of music already going on in this school.

Appendix G: Session Notes Template Example

Time	Teacher	Session Aims	Activities	Notes
8:15-8:45	ALL	PLC	Prepare for Whole School PD	
8:40-9:15	Amelia	Increase personal wellbeing / sing for pleasure Add songs into classroom – Meg fade out, allow Amelia to lead	You are My Sunshine – Students to participate according to chosen strengths Discuss performance next door Mary students song Shine On if time	
10-10:25	Kate	Kate to lead, Meg fade out	Addition of the verse ‘I can’ with NED song	
10:30-11	Jen	Encourage Jen to lead, with me filming perhaps?	Consolidate Special role for [student name] to ‘catch her being good’	
11-11:30	Justine, Kafka	Touch base	Plan next week Justine	
11:30-12:15	Justine	See where Justine is at with the playlist	Speak about excursion Practice happy song Find out how students will be accessing their playlist Begin song writing as a group – write lyrics for the chorus	
12:30-1:00	Kafka	Model structure and management strategies around the activities	Continue with instrument playing in small groups, this week students required to play music for an emotion,	

			students watching on determine whether they can guess the emotion	
1:10- 1:30	Kate / Liz	Piano and guitar lesson	Fleet foxes sing / guitar chords	
1:30- 2:30	Liz	Touch base Kafka planning?		
2:30- 3:15	Liz	Continue to encourage singing, guitar use	See planner – I'm a little teapot song.	
3:15- 4:45		Kafka planning? Justine / Jen?		

Appendix H: Examples of Teacher Planning Documentation

Justine planning documentation.

Initial unit planner.

Personal and Social Capability Student Learning Intentions	Activities	Resources	Assessment
• Exploring the links between their emotion and their behaviour. • Identify how persistence and adaptability can be used when faced with challenging situations and change. • Use appropriate language to describe what happens and how they feel when experiencing positive interactions and conflict.	Week 2-5 Music for wellbeing playlist – see student worksheet	Google docs template	Music for wellbeing playlist, compared with initial questionnaire

Student Music for Wellbeing Playlist template.

My Music for Wellbeing Playlist!

Week	Emotion	Behaviour – What does this look like for me?	Song and Artist that MATCHES feeling	What song can I listen to ADAPT my behaviour when faced with challenging situations and emotions?
2	Happy			N/A
2	Sad			
3	Angry / Frustrated			
4	Excited / Energised			
5	Anxious / Scared			

Kate planning documentation.

The Friend Song (Meg Steele, 2006).

Words and Chords	Prompts and actions
A I've got a friend, I've got a friend D A And they go to school with me G A G A G A G I talk to my friends (talk talk talk) I talk to my friends (talk A E7 A talk talk) and that's ok E7 A	(natural gesture for talk)

Yeah that's ok (Continue singing verses and ask students to suggest other things that are ok or not ok to do with friends i.e. shake hands, high five etc).	
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Pleasant Emotions: (To the tune of ‘if you’re happy and you know it’) (Meg Steele, 2017).

Happy can be substituted for other pleasant emotions.

Aims: To practice identifying pleasant emotions, and what to do if they occur, develop oral language.

Words and Chords	Prompts and actions
A E	<i>smile</i>
If you're happy and you know it you smile	
E A	<i>laugh</i>
If you're happy and you know it you laugh	
D A	<i>(Pause if needed to ask the child "what makes you feel happy?",</i>
If you're happy and you know it then you smile and you	<i>then encourage them to use to sentence structure in present tense</i>
laugh,	<i>"I feel happy when...")</i>
E A-D-A	
I feel happy when	

--	--

NED song (Co-created by Kate and Meg, 2017).

Aims: To set a personal goal, reinforce concept of resilience, oral language skills.

Words and Chords	Prompts and actions
C F C What do you want? C I want to to F C Never give up! F C Encourage each other!	<i>Look at student while singing this phrase</i> <i>(Pause if needed then encourage them to use to sentence structure in present tense “I want to ...”</i> <i>Shake finger</i> <i>Arms around people next to you</i>

F G C Do your best! C I think I can! x 4 I know I can! <i>(last time)</i>	<i>Thumbs up</i> <i>Chant rhythmically with arm actions like train.</i>
---	---

Helplessness Blues (Fleet Foxes, 2011).

[Verse 1]

C

I was raised up believing

F

I was somehow unique

G

Like a snowflake distinct among snowflakes

F

C

Unique in each way you can see

[Verse 2]

C

And now after some thinking

F

I'd say I'd rather be

G

A functioning cog in some great machinery

F

C

Serving something beyond me

[Chorus]

C F

But I don't, I don't know what that will be

C F C

I'll get back to you someday soon you will see

[Verse 3]

C

What's my name, what's my station

F

Oh just tell me what I should do

G

I don't need to be kind to the armies of night

F C

That would do such injustice to you

[Verse 4]

C

Or bow down and be grateful

F

And say "Sure take all that you see"

G

To the men who move only in dimly-lit halls

F C

And determine my future for me

[Chorus]

C F

And I don't, I don't know who to believe

C F C

I'll get back to you someday soon you will see

[Verse 6]

C

If I know only one thing

F

It's that everything that I see

G

Of the world outside is so inconceivable

F C

Often I barely can speak

Yeah I'm tongue tied and dizzy

F

And I can't keep it to myself

G

What good is it to sing helplessness blues?

F C

Why should I wait for anyone else?

[Chorus]

C F

And I know, I know you will keep me on the shelf

C F C

I'll come back to you someday soon myself

[Short Instrumental] C

[Choral Section]

C F

If I had an orchard

C F (Fadd9)

I'd work till I'm raw

F6 C

If I had an orchard

F Fsus4 F

I'd work till I'm sore

C F

And you would wait tables

C F Fsus4 F

And soon run the store

C F

Gold hair in the sunlight

C F (Fadd9)

My light in the dawn

F6 C

If I had an orchard

 F Fsus4 F

I'd work till I'm sore

C F

If I had an orchard

C F Fsus4 F

I'd work till I'm sore

Harmony Verse - follow same chord pattern as before...

C F

Someday I'll be

C F

Like the man on the screen

F - Fsus4 - F - C

Breathe in Now (George, 2002).

Verse

Am G

I see love and beauty all around,

Am G

I also see the sadness that's embedded in your frown

Am G E G

I wonder why you choose not to talk to those who surround,

G Am G

I sense a fear of lifting heavy feet, higher than you want to,

Am G E

I just want to believe you're true

Verse

you stand here but you do not cast a shadow,

you walk away with every word you choose not to say,

I suppose that moving on paints a new colour for each day,

I don't like to see dreams put on the shelf, to deal with on not one day,

I just want to be happy for you.

Chorus

F2 Gsus4 Am G

cause I only have one second this minute today

F G Am Gsus4

I can't press rewind and turn it back and call it now

F G Am G

and so this moment I just have to sing out loud

F G Am G

you say I love, while I can't breathe in now,

F G Am

you say I love, I live and breathe in now

Verse

I move on holding on to what I learned

It's time to let go of the notion that the whole world's against me

break free of shackles that formed young, time freer now.

I tell you now, it's not all up to me, I can count on another

so move on, lighter and be free.

Chorus

F2 Gsus4 Am G

cause I only have one second this minute today

F G Am Gsus4

I can't press rewind and turn it back and call it now

F G Am G

and so this moment I just have to sing out loud

F G Am G

you say I love, while I can't breathe in now, oh

F G Am

you say I love, I live and breathe in

Bridge

Am G E C

I believe in for today

Am G E C

I just want to know if you're okay

Am G E C

Cause I believe in breathing just for today

Am G E C

I just want you to know that you're okay

Chorus

F G Am G F G Am

Ahhhhhhhh heeeeee heeeeeeeeeee ooooooh

F2 Gsus4 Am G

cause I only have one second this minute today

F G Am Gsus4

I can't press rewind and turn it back and call it now

F G Am G

and so this moment I just have to sing out loud

F G Am G

you say I love, while I can't breathe in now,

F G Am G

you say I love, while I can't breathe in now,

F G Asus2

you say I love, I live and breathe in now

Liz planning documentation.

Teapot Song (To the tune of “I’m a little teapot” by Sanders & Kelly, word parody by Liz, 2017).

Aims: To encourage students to recognise stressful feelings, suggest a personal action to respond to feelings.

Words and Chords	Prompts and actions
G C G I’m a little teapot tense and stressed C G D G Flutter in my tummy, confused in my head G C G When I get all worked up I can... G D G	<i>(Pause if needed then encourage student to suggest a personal strategy).</i>

Now I'm calm I'll try again.	
------------------------------	--

Stressed Song (To the tune of “Happy” by Pharrell Williams, word parody by Liz, 2017).

Aims: To encourage students to use their breath to manage stressful feelings, resilience and having another go.

Words and Chords	Prompts and actions
A E D Your head spins if you're feeling really confused.	<i>Model deep breath</i>
A E D Your tummy flips if you're feeling really puzzled.	
A E D Take a breath if you know you need to calm down.	
A E D Now you're ready to try again, let's take it from the top.	

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Kafka planning documentation.

Moving hello song (Meg Steele, 2010).

Repeated chords throughout: E, G, D, A

Hello everybody, let's get ready for music

Hello, hello we're going to get moving

Hello, hello we're going to get grooving,

Hello, hello, so everybody...

(One verse each for stamp your feet, clap your hands, stand and shake, cross your arms, sit and sway, hands in laps etc.)

Hello everybody I think we're ready for our learning now!

Line up at the door chant (Co-created Kafka and Meg, 2017).

Pack up what you're doing! (x4)

Line up at the door! (x4)

You've lined up at the door,

Great job everyone!

Jen planning documentation.

Jen planning email.

Hi Meg,

I hope you have had an enjoyable weekend. I'm very excited to get the project underway!

I've had a look at the personal and social capability and identified the following as possible areas to work on with my students:

Personal and Social Capability / Levels 3 and 4 / Self-Awareness and Management / **Recognition and expression of emotions**

Content description

Identify and explore the expression of emotions in social situations and the impact on self and others

Elaborations

- exploring how you might feel when meeting new people
- identifying behaviours which may influence the emotions of self and others, such as smiling
- interpreting the possible emotions of others, by observing their body language

Personal and Social Capability / Levels 3 and 4 / Social Awareness and Management / **Collaboration**

Content description

Demonstrate skills for effective participation in group tasks and use criteria provided to reflect on the effectiveness of the teams in which they participate

Elaborations

- brainstorming the characteristics of an effective team
- listing cooperative skills required for effective teamwork, for example turn-taking, respecting different points of view, decision-making skills
- reflecting on the effectiveness of group tasks by using criteria

Personal and Social Capability / Levels 3 and 4 / Social Awareness and Management / Relationships and diversity

Content description

Identify the importance of including others in activities, groups and games

Elaborations

- identifying the emotions that are experienced if others are excluded from activities, groups or games
- developing inclusive practices which impact on others' emotions, such as 'invitation to join a group'
- recognising the effects of inclusive behaviour, for example 'feeling valued' or 'belonging to a group'

Possible assessment opportunities:

- observation with a check list of skills - date when the student has demonstrated the skill and annotate

- matching emotions to facial expressions and musical instrument/sound??
- role play scenarios of inclusion and exclusion with musical accompaniment

The AITSL standard that I'd like to focus on is the following: (I've copied the parts that I felt were the most relevant and I've also brainstormed underneath possible ways of achieving it).

Create and maintain supportive and safe learning environments

4.1 Support student participation

Graduate	Proficient	Highly Accomplished	Lead
Identify strategies to support inclusive student participation and engagement in classroom activities. • Show Illustrations	Establish and implement inclusive and positive interactions to engage and support all students in classroom activities. • Show Illustrations	Model effective practice and support colleagues to implement inclusive strategies that engage and support all students. • Show Illustrations Evidence	Demonstrate and lead by example the development of productive and inclusive learning environments across the school by reviewing inclusive strategies and exploring new approaches to engage and support all students. •
participating myself in all the activities presented to students			

being respectful of students who do not wish to participate and allowing them time to familiarise themselves with the program for a few weeks in the hopes that they will want to be involved. If they still do not want to participate, I could have a chat with them one on one to see what changes we can make to help them be involved

seating everyone in a circle so we are all on an equal playing field including adults

inviting students to share rather than selecting those who have not volunteered

participating in this program which is a new approach I previously have not tried before

sharing findings of the program with other teachers so they can implement parts of it with their students as well

The Same and Different Chant (To tune of traditional military cadence call and response, Meg Steele, 2016).

We are the kids of _____ school,
(*We are the kids of _____ school*)
We are fun and we are cool,
(*We are fun and we are cool*)
We're sometimes different sometimes same,
(*We're sometimes different sometimes same*)
So, let's play the same and different game,
(*So, let's play the same and different game*)
What do..., (*What do...*)
You like? (*You like?*)

Jen YouTube violin clips.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=deTT9RS_0ug

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=52R1b19zWgk>

Amelia planning documentation.

We will Rock You (Word parody Co-Created with Professional Learning Team, 2017).

We will we will collaborate

We will we will be heard

We are all in it together and we're going to be heard

And we're going to make a change

We're going to meet every fortnight, share our ideas and

Eat some snacks, we're the new rat pack.

We will we will have fun (x 4)

You are my Sunshine Word Parody (Co-created Amelia and Meg, 2017).

Verse 1 When I woke up this morning I wondered what the day would bring Who will I play with? Will I be happy? Will my teacher smile at me? Chorus I need some sunshine, I want some sunshine To make me happy if skies are grey I need friendship, and to be kind(?) I hope I have some sunshine today. Verse 2 When I'm on my way to school I think back to yesterday, When I felt lonely, my sunshine came over I can't wait to see them again! Chorus	Prompts: Ask students what they wonder Prompt students to think about how they could help themselves. Ask students what challenging emotion they have felt, what happened / or could happen to alleviate the situation.
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You are my sunshine, my only sunshine You make me happy when skies are grey You'll never know friend, how much I love you I can't wait to see my sunshine today. Verse 3 I get to school, I see my sunshine And it makes me feel so calm I'm not anxious any longer Because I know that I ... Chorus x 2	Ask how being welcomed and having a friend feels. Perhaps write a new verse about how to BE a sunshine?
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Perfect Day (Lou Reed, 1972).

Intro

E Am E Am

Verse

Am D

Just a perfect day,

G C

Drank Sangria in the park,

F Dm

And then later, when it gets dark,

E

We go home.

Am D

Just a perfect day

G C

Feed animals in the zoo

F Dm

Then later, a movie, too

E

And then home.

Chorus

A D

Oh it's such a perfect day

C#m D D/C#, D/B

I'm glad I spend it with you.

A E

Oh such a perfect day,

F#m E D

You just keep me hanging on,

F#m E D

You just keep me hanging on.

Verse (as above)

Just a perfect day

Problems all left alone,

Weekenders on our own,

It's such fun.

Just a perfect day,

You made me forget myself,

I thought I was someone else

Someone good.

Chorus (as above)

Instrumental

F#m E D (x2)

C#m G D D/C# D/B A

You're going to reap just what you saw (x4)

Appendix I: End Interview Templates

Interview questions Class Teachers

State date, location, and who is being interviewed.

This is an invitation for me to learn from you any insights you have about the Music for Classroom Wellbeing program and your take on it. I'm not looking for quotes to use in a media campaign – we want to learn about what works and what doesn't when implementing an arts project, what do staff need to know, or do to prepare themselves – what worked what could be done better? I'm just as interested in hearing about things that didn't go well as the things that did.

- So, what were your thoughts about it?
- What were your expectations about the program before it began? Have these been achieved?
- Can you comment on the wellbeing of the students through their participation? Your own wellbeing?
- What have you learnt / developed your teaching practice through your engagement with this program?
- Can you comment on the PLC?
- What would make it feasible for you to keep doing music for wellbeing in your classroom? Across the school
- Is there anything about the program that helped you engage in it?
- What about anything that could have helped it work better?
- How do you see that this program has contributed to the school?
- Is there anything else you would like to share about this program?

Interview questions Leadership Staff

State date, location, and who is being interviewed.

This is an invitation for me to learn from you any insights you have about the Music for Classroom Wellbeing program and your take on it. I'm not looking for quotes to use in a media campaign – we want to learn about what works and what doesn't when implementing an arts project, what do staff need to know, or do to prepare themselves – what worked what could be done better?

and I'm just as interested in hearing about things that didn't go well as the things that did.

- So, what were your thoughts about it?
- What were your expectations about the program before it began? Have these been achieved?
- How did the program link to your school context?
- Can you comment on the wellbeing of the students through their participation? Teachers' wellbeing?
- How have you seen the teachers develop their teaching practice through engagement with this program?
- Can you comment on the PLC? Staff meeting?
- What do you think would make it feasible for teachers to keep doing music for wellbeing in their classroom? Across the school?
- Is there anything about the program that helped?
- What about anything that could have helped it work better?
- How do you see that this program has contributed to the school?
- How was this program similar or different to last year?
- Is there anything else you would like to share about this program?

Appendix J Follow-Up Interview Template

Teachers Interview Questions:

State date, location, and who is being interviewed.

This interview is an opportunity for you to catch me up with anything that has happened since we spoke last year in terms of music, wellbeing or whatever you think is important. Remember that it's just as helpful for me to hear about the things that haven't worked or stuck as the things that have.

- So, tell me a bit about what has happened since I've seen you? (Prompt: over the holidays, in term 1, in relation to music (personal, classroom, school) / wellbeing (personal / classroom / school)?)
- Do you feel that any outcomes of our work together / the program have been sustained for you? If so, what? Why / why not?
- Can you think of anything that may have helped this to happen? What about anything that might have improved it?
- I'd also like to take the opportunity to ask you about some of my developing thoughts if that's ok?
- 5. During the program last year, I tried to support each of you personally. What was that like?
- 6. You mentioned that you felt...

Kate: 'little moments of feel good'

Liz: like you were better able to notice your own emotions in the
classroom

Amelia: given you a lift, at home and at school

Justine: more strategies

Kafka: more confident with managing student behaviour

Jen: 'me time' with violin

Can you comment further on this?

- During the program last year there was also lots of sharing: of music and ideas in the classroom, assembly, PLC, staff meeting. Can you comment on the value of this?
- I referred to the program as a professional learning program. What was this like compared to other professional learning you have engaged in?
- What do you see as the next steps in this journey?
- Is there anything else you would like to share?

Interview Questions Leadership Staff

State date, location, and who is being interviewed.

This interview is an opportunity for you to catch me up with anything that has happened since we spoke last year in terms of music, wellbeing or whatever you think is important. Remember that it's just as helpful for me to hear about the things that haven't worked or stuck as the things that have.

- So, tell me a bit about what has happened since I've seen you in terms of music and wellbeing?
- Do you feel that any outcomes of the program have been sustained? If so, what? Why / why not? (prompt wellbeing outcomes for staff / students, teachers improving practice, whole school outcomes)
- Can you think of anything that may have helped this to happen? What about anything that might have improved it?

I'd also like to take the opportunity to ask you about some of my developing thoughts if that's ok?

- During the program last year, I tried to support each of the teachers personally. What was that like for you as leadership staff?
- During the program last year there was also lots of sharing: of music and ideas in the classroom, assembly, PLC, staff meeting. Can you comment on the value of this for your school?
- I referred to the program as a professional learning program. What was this like compared to other professional learning you or your staff members have engaged in?

- What do you see as the next steps in this journey?
- Is there anything else you would like to share?

Appendix K: Muse Map

Major Themes: Teachers were supported to	Teacher Accounts	Teachers needed support due to...	How was music used to address these needs?	Principles that Guided Teacher Support:
Enrich musicality	Justine	Wide-ranging student needs, Student disengagement in learning	Participatory / collaborative	Use of teacher focused practices and practices that enable sharing.
	Kate	Time pressures with curriculum delivery	Resource-oriented	
Develop teaching practices	Kafka and Liz	Challenge of early career teachers	Reflexive	
	Jen	“Educapitalist” culture	Activist	
Foster self-care	Amelia	Demands of staying in the role	Performative / extended humanist	

Appendix L: Sung Reflection

A raw and unedited recording of this sung reflection can be accessed by the following link:

<https://www.dropbox.com/s/fif84ks5ef3ylad/Teacher%20I%20see%20You.m4a?dl=0>

Teacher, I see you (Meg Steele, 2019).

A D

I see this child at school that no one wants to teach.

A D

Too different, too noisy, too tough to reach

A D

Hey Meg, come over here I want to play you a song.

D

It will make me feel better...

D A

The bell goes. I'm sorry but I need to move on...

I look closer and see the teacher working through her break

She wants to do more scared she'll make a mistake

So much maths to do, so much spelling to get through

Hey Meg, what I really need is some help,

Could you help me please?

So teacher I'll help you
Teacher I'll sing a song for you
Teacher I'll ask you how you're going
I'll focus all the time I have on you

And as I'm driving to work I put a song on for me
And I take some deep breaths
So I can sustain myself
And get ready to be what you need me to be

Teacher I see a spark in your eyes
So I'll plant some seeds and watch you grow
Your students blossom when you care for yourself
And share with each other, your colleagues, your friends and your family.

